■ Across / A18
Siege of Malacañang is Cebu stopped after protesters clash with gov't troops

■ Business / B1
Fedex leaves Subic Bay for new regional hub in China

■ Across / A17
No more slaughter of soft-shelled turtles for 'pulutan'

■ News / A2 ■ Metro / A24
Get Garci, salons order law enforcers

Beauty surgeons to the stars face tax-related raps

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, July 14, 2005 • 32 pages / vol. 28 / no. 218

website: www.inq7.net

Cory told to fix Kris' love affairs, not affairs of state

By Armand N. Nocum

FORMER President Cory Aquino should first take care of her love affairs of her youngest daughter Kris before trying to fix the affairs of state.

CONTINUED

Moody's mood negative on RP; ADB warns Manila

By Doris Dumlao

THE POLITICAL crisis yesterday continued to take its toll on the economy with Moody's Investors Service downgrading its credit outlook citing "...the Philippines' vulnerability to political and the Asian Development Bank warning a near out-of-sync leading to the country.

CONTINUED

40,000 cry out: GMA, go

The day belongs to Susan Roces

By Fe Zamora, Tarra V. Quismundo and Jocelyn Uy

SOME 40,000 protesters massed in Makati yesterday in the largest opposition demonstration yet to press demands for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo over allegations she rigged last year's elections.

"I am here, just as I promised, that if you go to the streets, I will join you," said Susan Roces, widow of actor Fernando Poe Jr., to a roaring applause from the crowd.

"If we hang together our small voices, it will be strong ... With God's help, we will solve our problems through peaceful means."

Roces and Sen. Benigno Aquino led opposition leaders in their first major effort to show they could muster another People Power revolution to force Mrs Arroyo to step aside.

The stretch of Ayala de Roxas, from Ayala Avenue to De la Rosa Street was crammed with people coming from a broad spectrum of opposition groups and political parties, swinging banners and carrying streamers.

"Gloria resign ... Gloria is a thief," the crowd chanted. Crowds along the Ayala de

BUT WHERE'S THE CONFETTI? Without a doubt, the biggest show of force since the political crisis erupted last month, the mega-GMA-rowdiness "just enough to jolt" GMA.

A touch of show biz at business district

By Fe Zamora, Tarra V. Quismundo and Jocelyn Uy

AS 30 PERSONS campaigns in and surrounded yesterday, there was a touch of show biz in yesterday's rally to press demands that President Macapagal-Arroyo resign.

The festive atmosphere superseding that of a mob concert that marked yesterday's rally for the resignation of Ms Arroyo seemed to begin at 1 PM.

That was the time when the Ayala Ribbon Dancers, Freddie Aguilar and folk singer Cecilia

CONTINUED

President's men say she will not resign, 'not ever'

By Sheila S. Rivera, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Philip C. Tubeza

AS HER opponents mounted their biggest rally yesterday in Makati, President Macapagal-Arroyo remained defiant, with her office planning a supposedly massive counter-demonstration on Saturday.

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said Ms Arroyo would not stand down even if her detractors could mobilize half a million people in the streets.

"Well, she resigns? No, not ever. She will not leave. She personally told me," Defensor said.

At a forum of the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines, he said the President was tough. "I think she will survive this, and we're standing by her."

Rigoberto Tiglao, chief of the Presidential Management Staff, said Ms Arroyo "won't just simply resign because of demonstrations on the streets, even if there are protesters flag-arm asking her to resign."

CONTINUED

House impeach rap only 6 votes shy of required 79

By Michael Lim Ubac and TJ Burgonio

WHILE the opposition rather missed in a "weak" would become a legal vehicle for the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo, a member of the majority in the House of Representatives yesterday said.

After Rep. Joey Salceda, a close economic adviser of the President, said he's impressing the issue was legal because possible.

Salceda said the majority in the House already have that some 73 "hard core" anti-Arroyo lawmakers were ready to support any of the two impeachment complaints filed last month with the House secretary general.

The number is only six votes short of the required 79 signatures for the initiation of impeachment to be transmitted to the Senate, which could then be considered by the opposition immediately numbering more than former President Fidel Ramos and Senators Feli-

CONTINUED

Fear of Noli forces priest to rethink stand vs GMA

By Christian V. Esguerra

WHO'S afraid of a President Noli de Castro?

The possible scenario has responded several key members of the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP) that they were willing to give President Macapagal-Arroyo a chance to redeem herself and her administration.

"She might be a saint but she can still implement the much-needed reforms and, possibly, become a saint," Rev. Shenard de Leon, AMRSP vice chair, told the Inquirer in an interview yesterday.

But De Leon, provincial superior of the Manila Brothers of the Schools, made it clear that he was not speaking in behalf of the association, although he said a number of other religious superiors shared his new position.

He said one thing that helped them reconsider AMRSP's previous position was the realization that Vice President De Castro might not be up for the job as the country's highest official in case Ms Arroyo resigned.

"We're afraid of the Noli factor," he said.

Another factor was the belief that the

CONTINUED

A3
WEATHER FORECAST
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
THURSDAY, JULY 14, 2005
Second FRONTPAGE

AFP adopts one-Mrs. Doble policy

By Dona Pazcoguin

THE MILITARY yesterday dismissed allegations by the relatives of military intelligence agent Vidal Doble that Doble had sold the "Hello Garci" wiretaps for P2 million.

Maximo Ianiro, Doble's alleged mistress, told dzBB radio on Tuesday that she had witnessed the transaction between Doble and former National Bureau of Investigation deputy chief Samuel Ong, including a meeting in Spain during which the P2-million payment was made.

The military has always denied claims that it was the source of the tapes of the alleged wiretapped conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former election commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual, the AFP public information chief, accused Ianiro of making up a "wild, telenovela-like" story to attract attention.

"She is being exhibited in the name by the true Mrs. Doble, whom the AFP recognizes as the legal spouse," Pascual said.

Doble's wife, Arlene, and their two children have been under body security since June 13.

"Why did she speak only now? This could just be a family quarrel," Pascual said, adding that Ianiro should not be taken seriously.

Ianiro denied she and Doble were held against their will by Ong inside the San Carlos Seminary from June 10 to 13.

She said Doble mentioned to Ianiro Ong and Army that he was the source of the tape because he (Doble) had been taken into custody by both.

Ianiro had shown up at the seminary on June 13 claiming Doble had been "kidnapped" and had asked her to help him get out.

Get Garci, House wiretap probers tell law enforcers

By Michael Lim Ubac and Philip C. Tubeza

THE HOUSE committees hearing the "Gloriagate" tape scandal yesterday issued a strongly worded subpoena, said to be a de facto arrest order, against former election commissioner Virgilio Garcillano for him to appear before the congressional inquiry.

The five committees suspended the hearings which have dragged on for the past three weeks because of the absence of Garcillano whose presence is required to clarify his participation in the alleged fixing of the 2004 election.

The inquiry is to resume on Aug. 1, but legislators stressed that they were ready to reconvene the moment Garcillano surfaces.

Rep. Gilbert Remulla, the chair of the joint inquiry said the decision was made to suspend the hearings until Aug. 1 since Congress would be "preoccupied" with drawing up new rules of impeachment and proposals for Charter change after it resumes session on July 25.

'Master tape'

The committees also earlier summoned former deputy director of the National Bureau of Investigation Samuel Ong, who has claimed to have the "master tape" of the alleged conversation between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Garcillano.

Ong, like Garcillano, has been in hiding since the tape controversy broke out.

The subpoena directed law enforcement agencies, immigration personnel and the National intelligence community" to "exert all efforts to require the presence" of Garcillano in future hearings.

Rep. Eduardo Gullas, who asked for the subpoena, however, balked at the suggestion that Garcillano should be held by contempt by the House of Representatives if he continued to defy the order.

Akbayan Rep. Mayong Aguja said that with the chance for Mr Arroyo's resignation, the veracity of the audio tapes and the issue of the alleged electoral irregularities "must be now brought in a credible consensus-based to unity possible with Garci unedifying before the committees."

"The very essence of the wiretap inquiry—did he conspire with GMA to cheat in the 2004 elections—can only be answered straight from the horse's mouth. Yet he [Garcillano] keeps bragging over media, granting interviews left and right. If he can do this all over the place, why can't we find him and bring him to Batasan," said another Akbayan party-list member, Rep. Rosales.

In the absence of Ong and Garcillano, testimony yesterday mainly centered on the testimony of military intelligence chief Brig. Gen. Marlou Quesada, who admitted that the military had the capability to wiretap conversations over phone land lines.

He said that there were personnel trained to conduct wiretaps but said that the agency did not do so without a court order.

He also said that Maricris Ianiro, the appointed mistress of intelligence agent Vidal Doble was never in the custody of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces (ISAFP).

Quesada said that the ISAFP only had Doble, his wife, Arlene, and their two children under its custody.

Kill Doble

Ianiro told dzBB radio on Tuesday that her lover had voluntarily given the tape to Ong, disputing military claims that it was not the source of the tape.

Ianiro said she had been in Ong's custody but left on instruction because Ong wanted to kill Doble after bringing out the tape. (See related story.)

Quesada said that the agency's own investigation was allegation that Doble sold for P2 million the "Gloriagate" tape was "ridiculous."

He said the agency had known of the wiretapped conversations since before Mr Arroyo made public their existence on June 4 but did not give it much importance and only noted in its report that "there was a tape in the hands of people outside the government."

He said he was surprised that there was a transcript that was made public by Senator Mar Roxas and newspaper reports and broke the ongoing congressional inquiry.

The opposition yesterday also tried to resurrect its earlier proposal to compel Mr Arroyo to formally comment on the wiretapped conversations.

Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano said that based on his legal research, the probe committees had the legal right or power to compel the President to formally comment on the poll fraud allegations caught on tape.

SGAC HITS THE TARGET!

SGAC HITS THE TARGET

The Philippine's largest chain of gun retail business, found their new flagship store in giving better services and accessibility. Shooters Guns and Ammo Corporation (SGAC) has moved to a bigger site to render more reliable services in the most convenient way.

The one of its kind Gun Retailer was built from humble beginnings. From a simple store "R. de Leon Gunstore", founded by Ramulo B. de Leon Sr. with his spouse Elizabeth T. de Leon and with the continuous innovative market scaling plus hands on management it became SGAC. Now, more than a mere store headed by a successful son, Ramulo T. De Leon III together with his supportive wife Rosario Abril B. de Leon, SGAC's growth was unstoppable.

The company's expertises in manufacturing imported and local revolver, pistols, shotguns, ammunitions, firearm parts and other allied equipment was proven to be of world-class standards having passed the standard quality test, under the Department of Treasury Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms of Washington, D.C./USDB.

With the expanded territory, valued clients and consumers can expect more smooth-sailing transactions and more of world-class quality products.

GREETINGS FROM:

R.T. DE LEON III AND SONS
REALTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
De Leon Plaza, Veloz cor. Yacapin Street Cagayan de Oro City • Tel. no. 723881

ACTION LUMBER & HARDWARE

SENO METAL INC.
GUNS EMPIRE, INC.
WSC
YALE HARDWARE
GLORIOUS MORNING

Drilon leaving fate to Senate colleagues

Senate to revive North Rail probe

By TJ Burgonio

A P565 million project to rehabilitate a railway line north of Manila which was awarded without public bidding will be the focus of a Senate investigation when Congress resumes sessions on July 25.

Senate President Franklin Drilon yesterday cited the "national interest doctrine" invoked often by the government, including the questionable rehabilitation of the North Railway System, as a major issues behind his sudden withdrawal of support for President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Drilon said the Senate is set to hold hearings on the contract between the North Luzon Railways Corp. and the China National Machinery and Equipment Group (CNMEC) in order, initially, to fix the railway line from Caloocan City to Malolos, Bulacan.

But the 23 senators, he added, have to vote on the issue of whether the Senate acting as a Committee of the Whole or the Blue Ribbon Committee would conduct the inquiry once Congress resumes sessions on July 25.

"We'll conduct hearings on this," he said in a phone interview. "When we come back, we'll just vote on whether the Committee as a Whole or the Blue Ribbon Committee will handle the investigation."

Drilon's pronouncement comes two months after Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile delivered a privilege speech on the floor on Feb. 14 questioning the project's fraudulent terms, such as the award of the contract to DMSI without public bidding.

The contract was an offshoot of a $421 million loan agreement between Manila and Beijing during Ms Arroyo's state visit to China in 2004 for the rehabilitation of the railway system.

Enrile moved that the inquiry on the matter be handled by the Senate sitting as a Committee of the Whole, instead of the Blue Ribbon Committee, which usually handles such inquiries.

The Committee on Rules later ruled that the entire chamber would have to decide whether this should be referred to the Committee of the Whole or the Blue Ribbon Committee.

Drilon said that National Economic Development Authority (Neda) director general Romulo Neri and Jose Cortes of the North Luzon Railways Corp., among other parties in the project, would be accumulating valuable pertinent documents would be required for presentation.

"Evidence will be preserved, witnesses and treasury persons will be subpoenaed," he said of the upcoming inquiry.

Drilon admitted that the President's failure to address the concerns over anomalies in government, such as the North Railway rehabilitation project, was the last straw that forced him to cut his ties with her.

"It's hard for me to do this, but I had no follow-me remember," he said.

Drilon agreed with the issues raised by Enrile about the contract, including the agreement between the two parties for the import-import basis of China to provide the P421-million loan and disburse it to the contractor once the project is completed.

The amount is a loan to the Philippines, and the money will not be deposited into the country's account, Enrile said in a privilege speech.

Under the agreement, the Philippines would provide the remaining P82 million to cover the rest of the project.

The railway project, which will link Metro Manila, Central Luzon and Northern Luzon, is the biggest project between the Philippines and China.

Enrile also questioned the imposition of additional interest of 1 percent per annum on the project by the finance department, requiring it to the government to pay P28 million for every month of delay in the removal of squatters along the railway, and the role of Rizal Representative William Gio, who is another a member of the Chinese-Philippine governments, in the transaction.

By TJ Burgonio and Juliet Labog-Javellana

SENATE President Franklin Drilon, now in charge of having his grip on power following his withdrawal of support for President Macapagal-Arroyo, is leaving his fate to his colleagues.

"This is a matter that the entire Senate will decide, I will leave it at that," said Drilon in a phone interview.

As to the observation that he and the three other Liberal Party senators who asked the President to resign were now isolated, Drilon said: "That will be sort of once Congress opens on July 25."

The Senate can't hold elections for the presidency unless someone declares the position vacant when Congress opens on July 25. To elect a new Senate President, 13 votes would be needed.

Administration Sen. Blisten Jamalaya said the other day administration senators could form a new majority and elect a new Senate President with the help of Malacañang.

He said there could be a three-cornered battle for the Senate presidency between administration Sen. Manuel Villar, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and independent senator who "deserve" to gained re. President Estrada, who could provide the swing votes from his custody.

But Pimentel said the removal of Drilon was not the parliamentary concern now.

"My focus is the removal of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, anything else is back burner material," he said.

Drilon, one of the President's most trusted allies until he broke away, declined to say if he was taking steps to re-consolidate his forces in the majority bloc of senators, some of whom remain loyal to his bosses.

Apart from LP senators Francis Pangilinan, Rodolfo Biazon and Ramon Revilla, Drilon can be said to count on the support of Senators Juan Ponce and Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Jinggoy Estrada and Antonio Trillanes IV.

The Senate majority is composed of 14 senators, including Drilon's group.

The nominally two more senators: Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, who heads Estrada's party, has announced his membership in the group. Enrile says stylus himself as an independent opportunist and has been voting with the majority on certain occasions.

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson said Drilon can retain his post if the minority fails to muster the 13 votes(s needed to elect a Senate President and compose the majority bloc.

"That's the more logical move since Villar's position on GMA's resignation is not consistent with ours," Lacson said.

Villar said he and his Nacionalista Party would respect the constitutional succession but is leaving it up to the President to decide what she should do about allegations against her and calls for her resignation.

Villar, who is a member of the Wednesday Group which counts six senators, has said he would prefer to stick with the term sharing arrangement he has with Drilon.

Under the agreement, Drilon was to serve as Senate President for the first two years of the 12th Congress's three-year term, or up to July 2006, while Villar would serve the last year.

Lacson said that if the eight or nine opposition senators "stick" support to another Senate President, then Drilon can be replaced. But if the minority does not forge alliance with the majority, then Drilon can hold on as his post.

"Mentally I'd rather make him sing but he should know that we are now going to be an opposition-dominated Senate. He cannot have his feet on both camps," Lacson said.

"What's clear though is the minority now becomes the fulcrum of power in the Senate. So I see an opposition-dominated Senate when we resume session on July 25," he said.

'NOTHING NEW'

Palace shrugs off survey

By Christine D. Avendaño

MALACAÑANG is not about to bemoan the latest survey showing that most Metro Manila residents distrust President Macapagal-Arroyo and want her to step down.

"Metro Manila did not give its vote to President Noynoy in the elections and the survey results did not come as a surprise," said Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio yesterday reacting to the latest Pulse Asia survey that showed that 72 percent of Metro Manilans, diverse the President and 58 percent want her to resign.

Bunye insisted that the President won the election in 2004 and pressed that "no part of the country has the right to impose its sentiments upon the whole."

"Each and every Filipino across the land has an equal right to be heard and respected," Bunye said.

Actually, the attitude of the Palace was that it does not use surveys in making its decisions.

"Surveys are a particular tool for measuring political atmosphere but it can never be a basis for determining our political decisions," Presidential Management Staff head Rigoberto Tiglao told reporters in Malacañang.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita echoed Tiglao's line, saying that surveys are "something never as a measure on what we want to find out but I wish we can just look at surveys in the manner that we are just trying to explain something."

Tiglao said the poor approval ratings and ratings were nothing new to the administration.

"When you have a well-heeled, well-orchestrated campaign [against the President] ... that will certainly happen," Tiglao said.

"My only question is: What happens if next month or two months from now, the President's trust ratings go up again? Surveys are not eyes. It's the pulse of the people but it changes. You cannot determine the issues of the presidency by any poll," he said.

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said only Metro Manila had a very negative view of the political situation. "The results are so deep that people on sidewalks talk like political leaders of the opposition. That has to be looked," he said.

For his part, Gabriel Claudio, presidential adviser on political affairs, said the survey did not reflect the general sentiment of Metro Manila residents.

"There are only 300 respondents. I don't know if that is really a fair and accurate representation of thinking and sentiments of the people in Metro Manila," Claudio told reporters in San Juan.

He said those living outside Metro Manila should also be surveyed.

To prove that Ms Arroyo still enjoys public support in Metro Manila, three pro-administration lawmakers announced a massive multi-sectoral "gathering" at the Rizal Park.

House Majority Floor Leader Prospero C. Nograles criticized the latest survey results, saying that it is misleading and the survey itself was obviously skewed to reflect negatively on the President.

Nograles, in a press statement, said, "It was apparently aimed to the specifications of the people who commissioned the survey and smacks of political gimmickry".

The lawmaker pointed out that only 300 respondents were surveyed and the scope of the survey was limited to Metro Manila which cast doubts on its reliability and credibility.

"The survey does not embody the sentiments of 84 million Filipinos. In Metro Manila alone, there are 6 million people. Three hundred people cannot accurately represent the 'organa' vote outlook around the Presidency. That anti-vote 1/10 of one percent of the population in 2010. Besides, the National Capital Region does not the Philippine make," he emphasized.

The solon further advised Pulse Asia to conduct a survey with a bigger sampling size and to include provinces where the President was during the last elections to obtain a truly credible result.

He said that the frequency of the survey being released is coincide with major opposition events to oust the President is suspect. The solon cited the release of the results of a survey last week from the same agency which had been commissioned by deposed President Joseph Estrada and on the eve of the Iloilanes group's resignation as well as the solemn statement of former President Corazon Aquino.

"The fact remains that an overwhelming majority of our people remain solidly behind the President as manifested by the outpouring of support from grassroots and grassier political leaders," he said, stressing that the President enjoys overwhelming support in Mindanao which has not been surveyed by the rating agency.

With reports from Blanche L. Rivera and Alexis Romero

GMA to face suits if she quits–Salonga

By Arnaud N. Mauyao

FORMER Senate President Jovito Salonga, scandalized the grand old man of Philippine law and politics, yesterday said he does not see President Macapagal-Arroyo resigning as she would expose herself to a deluge of criminal charges.

In a radio interview, Salonga also dismissed as "impractical" the proposal from the Peralta, former President Fidel V. Ramos and their allies for the Constitution to be amended to effect a shift to a parliamentary system.

"The President will not resign. She insisted she resigns, she will lose her immunity from suit and face a deluge of criminal cases, including plunder and graft," Salonga told ANC radio in a mixture of English and Filipino.

If that were to happen, there is a possibility that the lawyer would follow ousted President Estrada into spending time at a "detention center."

Salonga is under "test house arrest" in Tanay, Rizal, while under trial for plunder and perjury.

Amid increasing calls for her to step down, the lawyer said she was not consulting because doing so would set the country on a political tailspin, characterized by endless coups and mass demonstrations and changes of government.

Salonga said the decision of former President Aquino to ask the President to step down and become President Ramos in stand by Mr. Arroyo had led to a policy "impasse."

By his calculations, however, Salonga said the President was "a little ahead."

"There was impasse because on one side there is Cory (Aquino), on the other FVR, but the assessment of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines has plainly Gloria is little ahead in by scoreboard," said Salonga, who also heads the civil society Salonggo and Ellen, hopes nongovernment organization.

Amending the Constitution, however, would not help the President get out of the "Hello Garci" controversy because the position was not with the Constitution but with her "lapse in judgment" in alleged by phoning an election commissioner during the elections, said Salonga.

Besides, the proposed constitutional amendments, if it pushes through, would likely take effect in 1998 or 1997, he said.

Also, the shift to a parliamentary system "cannot happen because the Senate does not want to be abolished," Salonga said.

"That can wait, it's not urgent. What is important is [for her] to get out of the present crisis," he said.

Salonga advised Malacañang to ensure that a proposed "truth commission" to get to the bottom of the tape scandal would be "credible, independent and imbued with powers to do deep to the matter."

He said the President cannot be the one to set up such a commission because no one would believe it.

"Congress must put it up with adequate power and powers to discipline and summon witnesses, [and] power to effectively to recommend anything that may be against the President," he said.

Salonga also pointed calls for the overhaul of the Commission on Elections, saying that the holding of the July 11 elections at the Quezon City Sports Club was a ploy by Malacañang even as Comelec officials are being accused of electoral irregularities would create bigger trouble for the government.

He asked the people to be "vigilant and be sure that the elections are clean, honest and peaceful, let's not choose people who will corrupt our electoral system."

SALONGA

Defensor's own people want GMA out of Palace

By Norman Bordadora

WHILE Environment Secretary Rikalod Defensor is defending President Macapagal-Arroyo, the issue is dead to death in the media amidst the mounting calls for her resignation, little does he know that majority of his employees at his own Department want the lameduck to either resign or be impeached.

An informal survey conducted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Employees' Union at the DENR main office in Quezon City showed that 63 percent of the 369 employees surveyed want their secretary's head in Malacañang resign.

There are 369 regular employees of the DENR at its central office.

The same survey also showed that 74 percent wanted Mrs. Arroyo to be impeached, with 26 percent of those surveyed wanting her to go through the process.

Nonetheless, and perhaps in Defensor's consolation, some 118 percent wanted Mrs. Arroyo to just resign and go.

Less than two percent, or nine respondents, want her to take a leave of absence.

The survey was conducted on July 12 during lunch hour at the DENR central office on Visayas Avenue in Quezon City.

Correction

IN THE JULY 10 issue, a story in Across the Nation's Inquirer Mindanao edition on Page A15 — "Death of a journalist, not just another" — state journalist Rolando Morales was erroneously described as a "black sheep" by Radyo Agong's program director Ben Sarigad. The word "bad" was inadvertently omitted in Sarigad's statement. The sentence should have read: "He was not a black sheep, according to Gene Sarigad, program director of Radyo Agong."

* * *

Readers may send their suggested corrections of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, ace editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Building, Globe Telecom Plaza, 8768 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, fax him at 897-8799 or 897-8841, e-mail addresses gliro@inquirer.com.ph and dailyinq@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about fair treatment in reporting may be sent, pending the appointment of a representative of readers, to Inquirer Readers' Relations, the same address and fax numbers or those of the ace editor, also e-mail address dailyinq@inquirer.com.ph.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, July 14, 2005
15th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Is 6:1-13
Gospel: Mt 10:24-33

At the epistle, Jesus warns, all persecutors work hard and long, only to have burdens and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest. For my yoke is good and my burden is light."
Commentary

And Jesus continues to pray, now drawing us into his prayer, letting us see his heart and the work of who he is — Come to me, if you work hard for the honor of the Father, the coming of Justice, the preaching of the gospel, the care of the least and carry the burden of the gospel, your small share of it costs for refreshment in Jesus' merciful presence. Take up Jesus' yoke, the yoke of being with Christ one step together so that we can do the work of God that we cannot begin to do alone. Take up the yoke of the cross, that Jesus was tied to, the yoke that stretched his arms out so that his body was in the sign of the cross. Take up the yoke where we put our arms on each other's shoulders and learn to dance into resurrection. Be with community, in need, or suffering and don't count on us, we are all born of Jesus' dance with the Father knows—the Jesus that is made from violent gentle, careful of others, and humble, truly found the love God and John is the rest, she being held in God that we meet.

Christian Publications Inc., 8 Mayaset St., CP Village, Cubao, Quezon City, 1109 PO Box 4 Cubao, 1109 Quezon City; tel. 911-5001; fax 911-5200; E-mail: cpi@cbcp.org; Website: http://www.cbcp.org/cpi.cfm?ChurchPublications Inc. | A http://mindanews.ehost.org A Newsletter of the Philippines

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

LABOR LAW; LABOR RELATIONS LAW) - Control test is an employer-employee relationship. The "control test" is the most important element of the employer-employee relationship, the "control test" is the most important. Compared to an employee, its independent contractor is one who carries on a distinct and independent business and undertakes to perform the job, work, or service on its own account and under its own responsibility according to its own manner and method, free from the control and direction of the principal in all matters connected with the performance of the work except as to the results thereof. Hence, while an independent contractor enjoys independence and freedom from the control and supervision of his principal, an employee is subject to the employer's power to control not only the means and methods by which the employee's work is to be performed and accomplished. It bears stressing that the existence of an employer-employee relationship cannot be negated by expressly repudiating it in a contract and providing therein that the employee is an independent contractor when, as in this case, the facts clearly show otherwise. Indeed, the employment status of a person is defined and prescribed by law and not by what the parties say it should be. (Encinas-Antonio G. Antonio Caffeda, Jr., Secretary Dinsmore, Chavez v. National Labor Relations Commission, G.R. No. 160520, January 17, 2005) — Ric R.B. Vitto

---

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD issued Resolution No. 001 8 005 entitled "Resolution Adopting the 5-Year Tariff Methodology" on January 14, 2005, and Resolution No. 008-0505 entitled "Resolution Approving the Guidelines for the 5-Year Tariff Setting Methodology" on May 19, 2005.

Under the issued resolutions, all new applications for Certificates of Public Convenience and petitions for tariff adjustments or rate increase filed by private water utility operators shall be evaluated using a 5-Year ROI Methodology, instead of the One-Year ROI or Break-Even Methodology, effective fifteen (15) days after the publication of NWRB Resolution No. 008-0505.

Copies of the approved Guidelines for the 5-Year ROI Methodology are available at the office of the National Water Resources Board at 6th Floor, NIA Building, EDSA, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila.

RAMON B. NUÑPALA
Executive Director

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD

RESOLUTION NO. 008-0505

Resolution Approving the Guidelines for the 5 Year Tariff Setting Methodology

THE NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD ("the Board"), a government institution, created and existing under Philippine laws, with office address at 8th Floor NIA Building, EDSA, Quezon City, states:

At the regular meeting of the Board held at its above-mentioned office on May 19, 2005, the following resolution was approved and confirmed, to wit:

WHEREAS, the NWRB is the grantee of a technical assistance grant from the Asian Development Bank ("ADB") under ADB TAR:123-REG Project entitled "Rationalizing Tariffs for Private Water Utilities under the NWRB" (hereinafter "the Project");

WHEREAS, during the 27th Board Meeting held on January 25, 2005, the recommendations under the Project to change NWRB's Tariff Setting Methodology from the existing one-year ROI and Break-Even Methodology to a 5-Year ROI Methodology was approved by the Board. Thereafter, the Board requested the consultant, IDP Consult, to prepare the guidelines for the implementation of the new 5-Year ROI methodology;

WHEREAS, during the 29th Board Meeting held on March 21, 2005, IDP Consult Team Leader Antonio de Vera presented the proposed Guidelines for the 5 - Year Methodology. The Board formed a Technical Working Group, composed of IDOE, DOJ, NEDA and the NWRB Secretariat to deliberate and make recommendations to the Board;

WHEREAS, the Technical Working Group recommended the approval of the Proposed Guidelines for the 5-Year ROI Methodology and further recommended that the NWRB Secretariat should:

a. Implement measures to ensure strict compliance with the annual reporting requirement using the redesigned annual report format as specified in the proposed guidelines.
b. Formulate performance benchmarks or industry averages for the different utilities, and relative thereto, start compiling the necessary data.
c. Adopt a system to enable the staff to evaluate the utility's MBK levels as well as other service parameters both at the beginning and end of the 5-year period.

A copy of the Technical Working Group's Report dated May 16, 2005 is attached and incorporated as part of this resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved that the Board hereby ADOPTS the recommendation of the Technical Working Group, as contained in its report dated May 16, 2005. RESOLVED FURTHER, that, as recommended by the Technical Working Group, the Proposed Guidelines for the 5-Year Tariff Setting Methodology, is hereby APPROVED.

The NWRB Secretariat is directed to forthwith cause the publication of the all-ongoing resolution and the Guidelines for the 5-Year Tariff Setting Methodology, at least fifteen (15) days prior to effectivity.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hand this May 19, 2005 in Quezon City.

Sgd. Michael T. Defensor, DENR (Chairman)
rep. Usec. Demetrio L. Ignacio, Jr.

Sec. Romulo L. Neri, NEDA (Vice-Chairman)
rep. ADG Ruben S. Reyness, Jr.

Members:

Sec. Cesar V. Purisima, DOF

Sec. Raul M. Gonzalez, DOJ
rep. Asst. Ruben Fondevilla

Sec. Manuel M. Dayrit, DOH
rep. Dr. Robert A. Sadang

Dir. Leonardo Q. Lanzanas, NWRC-UP

Executive Director Ramon B. Nuñpala, NWRB

Distributed by NewspaperDirect

Chavez antics meant to buy time for Cam, solons say

ADMINISTRATION lawmakers yesterday condemned the emotional outburst of lawyer Frank Chavez and his attack on their colleague, Sen. Richard Gordon, during the Senate "jueteng" hearing yesterday.

Lakas-CMD Reps. Marcelino Libanan (Eastern Samar) and Edwin Uy (Isabela), both lawyers, said Chavez's contemptuous behavior showed his arrogance and lack of respect for Congress and its members.

The congressmen, in a press statement, said Chavez's outburst was intended to deflect the Senate inquiry's focus on the eroding credibility of his client, confessed jueteng bagwoman Sandra Cam. Gordon was questioning Cam on her previous business dealings, including estafa charges filed against her, when Chavez stood up and accused Gordon of digging up his client's "dark past."

Libanan and Uy defended Gordon's line of questioning regarding Cam's background which they said was necessary in establishing the credibility of the witness as allowed in any investigation.

"Why should Atty. Chavez single out Senator Gordon when the other senators also interpellated Cam and her fellow jueteng witnesses and other resource persons like retired police Chief Supt. Restituto Mosqueda. It's obvious he wanted to save Cam from disgrace after Gordon's questions revealed the true and questionable character of Cam," said Libanan.

Libanan said the rules of inquiry allow members of an inquiring committee or committees to question a witness or resource person to extract the necessary information that may help resolve the issue of the inquiry.

"It's the right of Senator Gordon as a member of the jueteng probe committees to interpellate Cam to prevent the Senate from being used by individuals with vested interests."

Uy said Chavez's outburst was just a defense mechanism to protect Cam.

"He was shielding Cam after it became evident from Senator Gordon's line of questioning that she is a dubious character. It was a scheme to stop the exposure of her true character."

Uy added Chavez was buying time to coach Cam how to answer Gordon's revealing questions.

"Because of the Gordon-Chavez clash, the probe committees had to suddenly adjourn. The break would give Chavez enough time to coach his client so she could recover from Senator Gordon's revealing inquisition," he said.

DOLE takeover no problem for new NLRC chief

By Jerome Aning

THE NEWLY-APPOINTED head of the National Labor Relations Commission sees no reason to oppose the Department of Labor and Employment's administrative takeover of the agency.

NLRC Chair Benedicto Ernesto Bitonio Jr. said President Macapagal-Arroyo's controversial executive orders on the matter was "not an issue" for him.

He, however, admitted that the controversy "festered" under the tenure of his predecessor, Roy Señeres.

"The NLRC and the Department of Labor and Employment belong to the same family. The President's directive does not really change the mandates of the NLRC or the DOLE and neither are these mandates lost," he explained.

Señeres said Ms Arroyo's order was illegal and contrary to the Labor Code's provisions protecting the independence of the NLRC and limiting the DOLE's role to policy and program coordination only.

He argued that only Congress could change the Labor Code. He threatened to bring the controversy to court.

For his part, Bitonio said the huge backlog of cases and image of corruption and red tape plaguing the NLRC would be solved by "taking advantage of the human resources available" to the agency.

Aerobics helping GMA to withstand political blows, says Ermita

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AEROBICS is helping President Macapagal-Arroyo withstand the blows delivered by her detractors determined to force her out of office, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said yesterday.

Ermita said the President had remained physically fit thanks to her aerobics exercise with other Palace officials and friends every Monday and Thursday from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

"The President according to her aides is following her normal sleeping hours but I don't know of course, how the President feels with her burdened not removed," he said at a briefing in Malacañang.

The President, however, appeared exhausted from the last days of events over the past four days.

In her few and brief appearances before the media since Friday some observers noted that she had lost some weight and that the growing rings under her eyes indicated that she needed more rest.

On Tuesday at a ceremony where she accepted the nominations from 17 political parties supporting her calls for Charter change, the President was visibly fighting back sleep while Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. was speaking.

His speech went forgot to shake hands with De Venecia when she received the mementos, although she quickly corrected this lapse by turning around and shaking his hand.

Ermita said there was "no question" that the President was physically capable of exhorting a people power movement against her because her detractors was clear.

"This is not a problem she is going through for the first time. Her conscience is not bothered because she knows she is doing the right thing," Ermita said.

President's men say she will not resign, 'not ever'

"This is not meant to ensure people but just a session. The majority of the public will feel that if the government does not do anything if the country's laws are being flouted," Ermita said.

Gathering for peace

To prove that the President still enjoyed public support in the metropolis, Representatives Edcel Lagman (Partylist), Edcel Lagman (Partylist), Rodolfo Antonino (Partylist), Rodolfo Antonino (Partylist), Rodolfo Antonino

Moody's mood negative on RP; ADB warns Manila

From page A1

Moody's Investors Service on Wednesday became the third credit rating firm to shave days to cut its outlook on the Philippines, saying efforts to cut the budget deficit had been thrown into doubt by the political crisis.

The MSR made no direct reference to the crisis facing President Macapagal-Arroyo but said its board had approved a change in outlook to "BOO" under which "new lending could ramp from zero to as much as $1.5 billion, depending on the pace of fiscal consolidation and key sector reforms."

Leadership gap

Even so, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas governor Amando Tetangco played down fears that fiscal reforms will slip. "The government has already quickly to fill up the vacated posts of secretary of finance and heads of revenue-collecting agencies," Tetangco said.

"This eliminates the leadership gap that these officers said should allow continuity of the fiscal improvements seen earlier this year and the reform program going forward," he added.

The peso weakened on its renewed dollar buying on the political uncertainty, finishing at 56.15 to the US dollar on the Philippine Dealing System. Assets from 56.11 on Tuesday. The benchmark 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index also dropped 16.08 points, or 0.8 percent, to 1,894.04 after rising 0.9 percent on Tuesday.

"The market's fate remains in uncertain as the country's political crisis," said Jill Capital Securities research head Jose Vilano.

Most severe

Moody's said the resignation last week of Ms Arroyo's economic team, including Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, raised doubts about her administration's ability to maintain an improvement in the country's fiscal performance.

"Should there be a prolonged weakening of government effectiveness, or a change in government, future fiscal and external debt policies could be very different from that taken by the Arroyo government so far," Moody's said in a statement.

The agency, whose rating of Philippine sovereign debt is the most severe at four notches below investment grade, cut the outlook on its 10 long-term foreign- and local-currency ratings to negative from stable.

The move was similar to outlook changes made by Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings on Monday, with all three agencies citing the crisis facing Ms Arroyo over allegations of election fraud and of graft involving members of her family.

The downgrading of the outlook on the country is expected to result in a further cut in the country's credit rating, which would raise borrowing costs for Manila. The Arroyo administration relies on the global bond market to raise about $2 billion a year to cover its chronic budget deficits.

Moody's said the Supreme Court's decision to throw the impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo's allies, to ease some tensions and plug the budget deficit, suggested politics could derail reforms.

Moody's cited concerns that the political turmoil "might have negative consequences on the budget and external payments position."

Vulnerable to shocks

With a large buildup in public-sector debt and external debt making the country vulnerable to shocks, the departure of Ms Arroyo's top economic officials "raises doubts on the ability of the administration to preserve the recent improvements in the government's fiscal performance," Moody's said.

The government standard-case on estimated P5 billion a month unless the high court reversed its temporary restraining order on the SEC law.

Opposition lawmakers had contested the new VAT law, saying it was unconstitutional because it allowed the President to raise the rate to 22 percent from 10 percent next year. The Supreme Court is due to hear the case today and a tribunal spokesperson said a ruling could come this month.

Prior to the court finding, the government had estimated that this year's budget deficit could fall to P180 billion against the target of P300 billion, or 2.4 percent of gross domestic product. The fiscal shortfall in 2009 was P287 billion, equaling 3.9 percent of GDP.

ADB warning

ADB vice president Joseph Lichtenberger told the executive board the new strategy "acknowledges the complex political economy of the Philippines and how this affects the pace and quality of reforms.

"To accommodate the uncertainty, and to a clear break with past practice, the ADB has not included specific annual lending targets within its medium-term envelope of possible financial support," he added.

Lichtenberger said the ADB, which lent about $300 million to Manila last year, could now pursue a "business as usual approach."

He said loan processing "will not be allowed to run ahead of the political, macroeconomic and sector supports" necessary to ensure the success of projects.

The ADB and its financial support lends starting in the 2009 fiscal year "will be contingent on significant, front-loading of the fiscal consolidation process, backed by an enhanced tax effort to ensure the sustainability of economic reforms."

National treasurer

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the Philippines was fully on public oil repaying to foreign debt despite the political turmoil and a recent string of warnings from credit rating agencies.

Cruz stressed that the government would not default on any of its bonds or other debt.

"We're here happening, I know fully well the government's debt maturities," Cruz said.

Latest available data from the Central Bank show the Philippines' public foreign debt—which accounted for roughly two-thirds of the country's total foreign debt of $53.5 billion (overall billion) at the end of March—had an average maturity of 28 years.

Relentless reforms

Cruz also said the government would be relentless in pursuing fiscal reforms and would work to convince the Supreme Court to lift the suspension of the new VAT law.

He acknowledged that the concern expressed by the credit rating firms were valid.

"Government party are filled up now so they are now given the mandate to get on and continue the momentum made all this time ... The gaps in leader ship in key areas have been addressed," he pointed out.

On Tuesday, Ms Arroyo appointed Marguerite "Cori" Ermita—a respected bank president, economist and former congressman—as finance secretary. Ermita said his immediate goal was to improve tax collection to avert the potential revenue loss if the Supreme Court's frame of a broad sales tax was rescinded.

The American-educated economist has inherited an economy where the outstanding debt, as of April, ran to P5.867 trillion, including P52.14 billion owed to foreign creditors, according to central bank data.

No illusions

Ermita said he had no illusions about the job. "I know it won't be easy but it is possible to turn things around."

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said economic fundamentals remained sound and the government was determined to remove legal obstacles to implementation of the VAT law.

The American Chamber of Commerce said the crisis "severely impairs on the ability of the current administration to govern effectively."

"We urge Filipinos to resolve this crisis in the earliest possible time, under the rule of law and the Philippine Constitution," it said in a statement. *With reports from AP, AFP and Reuters*

Cory told to fix . . .

From page A1

This advice came from Antipolo downstary Saud Gonzalez, who claimed to have received her divine lot career by introducing Cory and Ates to Regal Films mainstark Mother Lily Monteverde shortly after the 1986 People Power uprising, which installed the elder Aquino in power.

"She should first take care of her daughter," Gonzalez said, apparently referring to the young Aquino, who had been romantically involved with then married scandalous to the women's group Aquino-Cojuangco clan.

Last year, Kris—an actress, TV host and product endorser—shocked the country with her tumultuous televised breakup with then ex-partner, former Pangkayan Wayne Sony Marquez. She even announced that the actor-politician had indicated her with a sex at divorce.

GONZALEZ: She worked near Cesaire's troubles.

Regal's company lawyer

Gonzalez, who did not mention Kris by name, said he introduced her to the movie world while he was serving as company lawyer of Regal Films.

"I was the one, in fact, responsible for making Kris a movie actress because I was the one who introduced her to Mother Lily," he boasted.

No need to monitor Cory

In a breakfast forum earlier in the day, Gonzalez said the government was no longer going to monitor the movements of Cory Aquino, who had rallied for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo on Friday.

"I think there is no need to monitor Cory Aquino because she's also busy monitoring her own daughter," he said.

"It appears that she is scanning that her voice alone can change the situation in the country," he said.

Asked whether Cory's political influence had waned, he said it had not, crediting the memory of her husband, former Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, who is hailed as a martyr for democracy and national hero. His assassination on Aug. 21, 1983 triggered People Power on Edsa that toppled the Marcos dictatorship.

Right to speak

Gonzalez said that in a former President, Cory had "every right to speak about national affairs."

But former Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman did not relish Gonzalez's insults.

"I'm amused that Gonzalez is trying to divert attention from the issues by attacking Cory," Soliman said.

Soliman said the Supreme Court's decision to throw out the impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo proved to be false.

Soliman told the business last Tuesday that the case would be merely on alleged anomalies in the Arroyo administration if an impeachment trial pushed through, or any other "proper venue" for the rule of the judicial process.

Gonzalez questioned about Soliman's timing, asking why it was only now that she was offering to tell all about the President. "Deplorable," he said.

'Rally of 2'

The justice chief also hit Fr. Robert Reyes, who is known as the "unsung priest," for staging a "rally of two" at the Edsa People Power Monument for Arroyo now, noting that so far it has failed to draw support from the people.

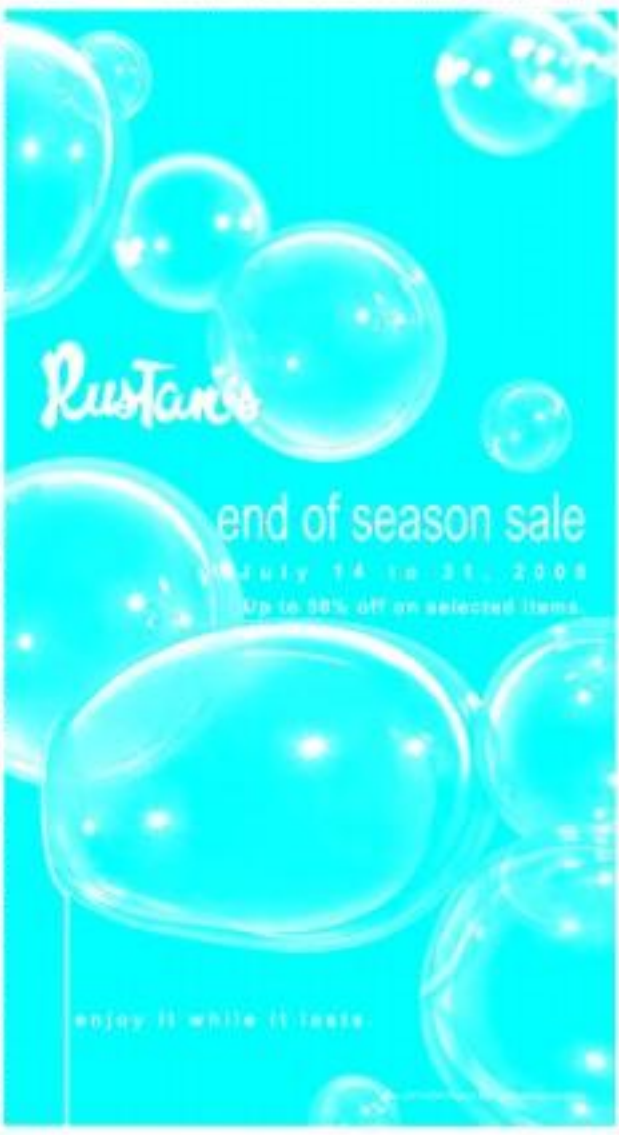
"These people should have their heads examined," he said of Reyes and Fr. "Pad" Arroyo, organizers of a march from the Manila Cathedral to the People Power Monument.

'Brink of civil war'

At noon yesterday, Father Arroyo spoke at the Edsa Shrine to invite the antagonists to join them in the protest movement as the country was "on the brink of a civil war."

Gonzalez said the two priests were courting fate and confrontation at the Edsa monument.

"I think Father Robert should stop running around that monument," he said.



SPORTS

E-mail: sr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Teddyboy G. Molavedra

Chinese ace lifts Asia to 5-0 lead

By Marc Anthony Reyes

WORLD No. 1 Lin Dan of China made short work of Germany's Rüscen Joppien, 15-2, 15-3, last night to give Team Asia a commanding 5-0 lead against Team Europe in the MVP Cup: Asia vs Europe badminton showdown at the PhilSports Arena.

Lin played with uncanny efficiency in sweeping the region's fourth straight win, worth two points, as Team Asia threatened to end the regional clash into a lopsided romp.

"I tried pushing his weakness and [I couldn't find any weight," said Joppien of the 21-year-old Lin, who kept him on his toes with deceptive drop shots from the net and from the baseline.

"Everywhere in the world, [play] is getting [at] 100 per cent," said Lin, who rallied to a 10-1 lead in the first set.

Though known more for his substance than style, Lin reminded Indonesian rival Taufik Hidayat 16a couple the crowd's fancy by flicking a return behind his back that gave him an 11-2 lead. He now exploded with a smash that tipped the net, for which he quickly apologized to his fellow Celebrity.

"It's been a big honor because people obviously follow the game," said Joppien, the world No. 37 who is still recovering from a viral illness.

The German scored just two winners in the match as he failed to counter Lin's crisp footwork to his backhand.

And when Joppien took a 3-1 lead in the second set, Lin dashed his hopes by stepping up the tempo. A backhand kill by Lin sealed the match.

Earlier in the Celebrity Match, the pair of Philippine Daily Inquirer president Betty Pinto-Romualdez and movie actor Herbert Bautista downed TV personalities Boots Castillejo and Tina Monzon-Palma, 15-10, 15-5.

A former national team member, Romualdez showed her partnership through a close first set where they trailed, 7-8, before scoring seven straight points to put the sassy

CHINESE World No. 1 Lin Dan does her a smash against her country's Rüscen Joppien. AUGUST SANCHEZ

Hidayat, Lin show two sides of a continent

By Marc Anthony Reyes

TAUFIK Hidayat, the flashy-crowd darling, and Lin Dan, the shy-natured lethal weapon.

Almost literally fitting the two shoes—aside from the side of the court they're on in the MVP Cup: Asia vs Europe badminton challenge—is a long-standing fable.

"It's a great thing to be playing together [with Lin], this time for Asia," said the 23-year-old Indonesian, who just recently learned to Lin in the badminton Cup singles finals in Jakarta.

With his fancy shots and uncanny ability to make placements shots off opponents' smashes, it would not surprising why Hidayat, the reigning Olympic champion and world No. 8, has endeared himself to the Filipino crowd.

"I love this country [because] this is where I won my first title [1997 Asian junior champ. reading.]," said the Indonesian, who overcame a pulled abdominal muscle to crush Chenyuan Li, Indon Rossan, 15-13, 11-4, Tuesday night.

Lin, the 23-year-old Thomas Cup and world champion, owned the Philippines is also dear to his heart. I was also in Manila when he, playing as a junior, upset fellow four years ago.

Still, it's a last-time to have four of the most recognizable badminton stars, rivals so far, playing as teammates for a change.

"That makes this tournament special," said team manager Datuk Punch Gunalan. "We get to [see] together the region's top talent to entertain and put them on display on the world stage."

Asuncion siblings undaunted by world's best pair

AT WORKERS set up the Philsports arena right after lunch yesterday for the night's triple bill, siblings Kenna and Jeremiah Asuncion were sweating it out on the court against two Indonesian guys.

Part unplugged baloney attendees, pickled their net game and tried out the strategy they plan to use against Wibowo Baskoro and Hadi Ilham in today's mixed doubles match.

The Filipinos, ranked 29th in the world, are up against the undisputed No. 1 pair in what many are predicting to be a monumental massacre.

Inasmuch, 25, logged in dangers.

"Everybody where they go into the court, whatever they face, has a 50-50 chance," he said.

"But frame of mind should be a big help for the Asuncion's come game time.

The match they are playing are crucial for Team Asia because by this, the score amended per were games is three points.

The Asuncions lost, 15-7, 15-7, the only time they faced the English pair in the second round of the 2005 Korean Open, which offered bottle to the debuts Olympics.

Marc Anthony Reyes

Armstrong back in command A27

Take home a crocodile this weekend!

LACOSTE FOOTWEAR
SALE
July 14-17, 2005

LACOSTE FOOTWEAR

No more 'girl talk' for GMA, pals at Palace

By Blanche S. Rivera

NO MORE girl talk for President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Silvestre said to be "girl sessions" in Malacañang ended with the resignation of the President's girl friends in the Cabinet last week, Interior and Local Government Secretary Michael T. Defensor said yesterday.

Defensor, one of the President's closest advisers, said that the President was still hurt and sad for what he called the betrayal of her friends, particularly former Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman and presidential adviser for the peace process Teresita "Ging" Deles.

"She's tough... Until she's affected by what happened in the Cabinet. Most of those who left, particularly the women, were close to her. They had their sure girl sessions," Defensor said in a forum of the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines yesterday.

He said the female Cabinet members had more access to the Arroyo than the men.

"They would have second coffee morning themselves and they would talk about so many things. I don't know what they talked about. I never had that and neither did the other members of the Cabinet who were perceived to be close to the President," Defensor said.

"We are never any richer because of her talk with you one on one? Can we have coffee with you? That never happened with us," he said.

The women, on the other hand, would simply call the President and ask if they could sit down with her to discuss things over coffee.

From the finance group within Malacañang who had broken away and joined calls for the President's resignation, Saguisag "stroked," Defensor said.

"There was really betrayal," Defensor said. Others, Arroyo's political spokesperson Ami Santiago, Defensor said.

Aside from Soliman and Deles, those who called for the girl session according to Defensor were Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, Interior Secretary Imelda Pilapil-Bautista, Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin and Official Development Assistance Secretary Mar Roxas, a former classmate of the President's.

Defensor said Deles is partisan, but "her core issue" with the President as Ms. Arroyo supported the Ayala Foundation, an enclave of civil society members who were part of the Cabinet.

Of the six Cabinet women, only Sto. Tomas, Bautista and Abaloz have not left the Arroyo camp in the political crisis. Soliman, Deles and Boncodin have called for the President's resignation.

BREAKTHROUGH IN CANCER CURE!
A herbal extract from vasa tea exerts tardent effective against cancer diseases at UP Institute of Biology
Contact: Sir Tan Agustin
for more information
Cell numbers 09209089092, 09209108988

New Customs chief pledges new schemes to meet goals

By Lelia B. Salaverria

THE NEWLY-APPOINTED customs commissioner yesterday said he would implement new strategies to ensure the revenue-generating agency would meet its target collection amid fears of an economic crisis following the political turmoil gripping the nation.

Alexander Arevalo, the new officer in-charge of the Bureau of Customs, said he has already instructed his key personnel and example: "Number one, meet the target; number two, meet the target; number three, if you miss (out on the number) two, go to number one."

Arevalo was appointed customs officer in charge after the resignation of Allen Lim, who was one of 18 cabinet officials who not only resigned their posts last week but also called on the President to step down. Former Landbank president Margarito Teves was also appointed Finance secretary to replace Cesar Purisima, leader of the so-called Hyatt 10.

The President has been beset with criticisms regarding her alleged participation in election fraud after her wiretapped conversation were revealed to be genuine.

Decentralized operations

Speaking to reporters after his swearing ceremonies at the bureau yesterday, Arevalo said he would decentralize operations at the bureau in order to give its 15 district collectorates more efficient room to meet their target collections.

"I will give them enough authority, responsibility and accountability for them to be able to do their jobs. I will decentralize operations," he said.

The Customs bureau, one of the country's biggest revenue generators, is tasked to collect P151.181 billion for 2005. In the last two quarters, it failed to meet its target, albeit by small margins.

For the third quarter, the bureau is aiming to collect P38.962 billion.

The new customs chief said he would be meeting as well with the private sector to get their suggestions on how the bureau could improve its services.

Arevalo also said he would not implement a revamp at the bureau in the meantime.

"I believe the best possible source of personnel and expertise is the BOC. I intend, as OIC of the BOC, to maximize the capability of its people," he said.

12-hour workday

Arevalo said he would also not issue an enforce the 12-hour workday started by Lim to enable businesses to finish more transactions in a quicker pace and to foster a better working environment.

He also said he would implement his predecessor's "aggressive effort" to help expedite cargo working with the bureau.

As for the drive against illegal shipments, Arevalo said he would meet with the anti-smuggling task force to drum up energies.

Meanwhile, a non-government organization yesterday lauded the appointments of Arevalo as Customs officer in charge and Teves as Finance secretary.

In a statement, Boy Bangit, president of the Association for the Socio-economic Advancement of Filipinos (ASAP), said Arevalo and Teves were the best choice to fulfill President Macapagal-Arroyo's economic development program.

Bangit said Teves' appointment is expected to gear the economic set of to prevent crisis, he said his experience as a politician and banker is sure to help him achieve the economic goals of the administration.

Bangit also said Arevalo's appointment as Customs OIC was welcome news to businesses and employees, noting Arevalo is a "dedicated and honest public servant whose career in government is not tainted with any scandal."

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Rosica

Suicide bombers feared behind London attacks

POLICE officers search the area near the home of (suspects) in connection to last week's deadly bombings, on Colwyn Road in Leeds July 13. AFP

LEEDS, England—New evidence suggests four suicide bombers, including at least three Britons of Pakistani descent, carried out the terror attacks in London, officials said. Surveillance cameras captured the men as they arrived in the capital 20 minutes before the explosions began.

Police raided six homes in Leeds Tuesday searching for explosives and computer files that would shed more light on what were believed to be the suicide bombings in Western Europe. They revealed a man, identified by the British news agency Press Association as a victim of one of the suspected bombers.

A town councilor told The Associated Press that an Asian donor of the presumed suicide bombers were British citizens of Pakistani ancestry.

One man thought to be Shahzad Tanweer, a 22-year-old cricket-loving sports science graduate, and another who was a teenager, Press Association reported.

On its website, The Times newspaper named Tanweer, as well as Leeds residents Hasib Hussain, 18, and Mohammad Sidique Khan, the 29-year-old father of an 8-month-old baby. The newspaper said police were still trying to identify the fourth bomber.

Without citing sources, the Times said the masterminded behind the attacks as well as the bombmak-ers were still thought to be at large. Police found a "bomb factory" during the Leeds raids, the newspaper said. Police did not identify the four suspects.

Press Association said the men's last ticket a round trip to Luton, 56 km north of London, and three boarded a commuter train to London's King's Cross station. Police denied Luton's train station and control unit were controlled explosions as a jacked cut, which the BBC reported contained explosives.

Closed circuit TV video showed all four men arriving at King's Cross by 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, about 20 minutes before the blasts began, said Peter Clarke, head of the Metropolitan Police counterterrorism branch.

US intelligence agencies are checking the names of the London bombers against their databases looking for any US connection, US President George W. Bush told chief executives at a private White House meeting Tuesday.

Two militant Islamic groups have claimed responsibility for the bombings, which killed at least 52 people.

Although police accepted short of calling them suicide attacks, Clarke said "strong forensic and other evidence" suggests one of the suspects was killed in a subway bombing and property belonging to the three others was found at the locations of the other blasts.

"The investigation is quite early but as to have concerns about the movements and activities of four men, three of whom came from the West Yorkshire area," Clarke said. AP

Car bomb kills 24 Iraqi children

BAGHDAD—Twenty-four Iraqi children and a US soldier were killed Wednesday morning in a suicide car bomb attack in southeast Baghdad, hospital sources and US forces said.

Some 20 more children were wounded, along with three US soldiers, they said.

"A driver approached one of the US humvees and then detonated his car," said Sergeant David Abrams.

Prime Minister Ibrahim Al-Jaafari, 58, said US forces turned up to the Al-Ashbah district to warn residents to stay indoors because of reports of car bombs in the area.

"Children gathered around the American vehicle when the bombing occurred. Suddenly a suicide car bomber driven would from a side street and blew himself up," he added.

"I was at home. I heard the explosion. I rushed outside to find my son. I only found his bicycle," said Abu Hamed, whose 12-year-old son Mohammed was killed in the attack.

He was speaking at Khadi Jaqiri al where hundreds of distraught parents mingled in blood-soaked hallways searching and identifying bodies.

He said he had found his son in the hospital morgue.

"I recognized him from his head. The rest of the body was completely burnt," he said.

Mohammed Mohammed, whose 11-year-old son Alaa also died, swore at Americans for attacking civilians.

"Why do they attack our children? They just destroyed one US Humvee, but they killed dozens of our children," he said as screams at the hospital resounded and slapped their faces and tore dressings over the head.

"What sort of a resistance is that? It is a crime," he added.

The last major attack involving children was a triple car bomb on Sept. 30 against US troops manning a water treatment plant in western Baghdad which killed 43 people including 17 children. AFP

3 trains collide in Pakistan; up to 150 killed

SUKKUR, Pakistan—Three crowded passenger trains collided in a devastating crash at a station in southern Sindhan Wednesday, killing up to 150 people, injuring 1,000 and leaving many others trapped, officials said.

The driver of one express slammed a signal and ploughed into a stationary train full of sleeping passengers near the remote town of Ghotki, then a third train smashed headon into the wreckage, according to railway officials.

Rescuers were trying to save dozens of people still imprisoned in the mangled carriages of the three trains, which lay scattered across pillars of debris and body parts.

"It's a painful scene. There are bodies scattered all over. People are crying, fathers are looking for children, husbands for their wives and brothers for their sisters," a witness told AFP by telephone.

Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf ordered an urgent investigation and promised to punish those responsible for the pre-dawn pile-up, the country's worst in 15 years.

"It's a tragic accident. I am deeply saddened. I express my condolences," he said, state television. "It was not sabotage, it appears to have been caused by some combination."

Musharraf said AFP people were confirmed dead but Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, the minister of railways in Pakistan Railways, told AFP that about 150 had been killed.

Local hospitals reported that 1,02 bodies had been brought in as the area's worst northern continued to pull many from the carriages, officials said.

Around 1,000 people were injured, local police chief Agha Iftikharuzzad Tahir said. Many of the victims were women and children.

The accident happened either one of the trains, the Quetta Express, stopped for repairs at Sadhaul station near Ghotki and the Karachi Express coming from Lahore smashed into it around 5 a.m.

Dozens of carriages were catapulted onto a parallel track and a third train, the Tez Gam Express heading for Islamabad's Rawalpindi, then careened into them.

Railway officials blamed the Karachi Express driver for rammed ing a signal at Sadhaul station that turned green to allow the Quetta Express to move off.

The train was travelling at a speed of 120 km an hour when it hit and the force sliced the sandwiched train in half, Ismail Qureshi, a senior railway official told AFP.

"The driver of the Karachi Express thought the signal allowed him to pass and he rammed into the rear part of the Quetta Express," Qureshi said. AFP

Worse yet to come – Iraqi PM

BAGHDAD—Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari has told his visiting country masters to brace for even larger attacks as insurgents enact revenge on the government for its "success" in rebuilding the country.

At least 30 Iraqis were killed in a car bomb explosion at a police station in Baghdad as the country's Sunni Arab minority observed the start of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

Jaafari told a US delegation led by Vice President Dick Cheney that the bombings were "the price we have to pay for democracy."

"We are making progress in the process and every time we make big achievements, the enemies will be big. The operation (Sheriff's Killing) aims to undermine the major political progress we achieved in a short time," the Iraqi foreign minister told reporters in Baghdad.

Iraqi foreign ministry delegation is being dispatched to Cairo in order to clear the rift between the two countries that emerged after the killing of Sharif, who was kidnapped from a Baghdad street on July 2.

President Jalal Talabani met Iraq's envoy to Cairo India al-Sahaaf and asked him to deliver a letter to President Hosni Mubarak and according to Sharif's family, and a statement from his office.

Egypt has cut its staff at its Baghdad mission and has withdrawn recently rejected accusations by Iraqi officials that Sharif may have compromised his security by overstaying the "grace period" of two days granted to foreign diplomats to leave Iraq.

He said he had found his son in the hospital morgue.

"I recognized him from his head. The rest of the body was completely burnt," he said.

Mohammed Mohammed, whose 11-year-old son Alaa also died, swore at Americans for attacking civilians.

"Why do they attack our children? They just destroyed one US Humvee, but they killed dozens of our children," he said as screams at the hospital resounded and slapped their faces and tore dressings over the head.

"What sort of a resistance is that? It is a crime," he added.

The last major attack involving children was a triple car bomb on Sept. 30 against US troops manning a water treatment plant in western Baghdad which killed 43 people including 17 children. AFP

Prince Albert takes Monaco throne

MONACO—Kneeling before the archbishop of Monaco, Prince Albert II on Tuesday received the blessing that marked his formal accession to the throne of the Mediterranean principality, ceremonies with high history, gambling and a lot of glamour.

Albert took the throne on behalf of the ailing Prince Rainier died in April this year, pledged to help Monaco play a more important role on international financial markets and the authorities have more say in the city's rules.

"It is my firm intention to continue resolutely making Monaco one of the world poles in financial regulation, by adding management skills to the already renowned banking skills," he said in a speech during a reception for 6,000 of the prince palace's 13,000 residents.

"Monaco must develop state-of-the-art financial tools in this domain to provide our private property jurisdiction of operating efficiently on all markets.

"I intend however that ethics remain the backdrop for all the actions of the Monegasque authorities. Ethics are not divisible. Money and crimes must be combated permanently," he said.

"The importance of Monaco's financial market will require vigorous vigilance to avoid the development of the type of financial activities which are not welcome in our country" after the prince had stopped speaking, cachet in the harbour to sprinkled by wreathing their horns.

Albert took the throne on behalf of the sailing Prince Rainier died in April this year, pledged to help Monaco play a more important role on international financial markets and the authorities have more say in the city's rules.

Church bells rang out and the small crowd gathered outside the cathedral applauded as Charlene and Albert and his relatives left the church, when Rainier and his late first wife Grace Kelly are buried.

The Grimaldis walked the few hundred metres back to their hilltop palace, where they toasted a gigantic party for senior Monaco officials in the first minutes rain.

It was the first official outing for Albert and his sisters, Stephanie and Caroline — whose temperament differs from for years filled the pages of the celebrity press — since Rainier's funeral in April.

Albert donned a dark suit for the solemn moment in the cathedral, Caroline was dressed not too cheerful rose, a wide-brimmed black hat and long white gloves, while Stephanie wore a white and pale floral dress.

"We're delighted with him!" said one of the onlookers, Virginie Bergeron, a retired Monegasque who

PRINCE Albert II of Monaco presents the city square he created in front of Princess Stephanie July 13 at the Monaco's Palace, after his accession to the throne. The bereaved man was then a week after Albert confirmed he was the father of a 22-month-old boy. AFP

rance debarcadere in the principality for 40 years.

"He had that he officially recognised his son shows that he's a very modern prince," she added.

Albert, a 42 year-old bachelor whose fortune is estimated at some two billion euros (2.4 billion dollars), admitted last Wednesday the last day of official mourning for Rainier, that he was a father.

The boy 22 month old Alexandre Coste, cannot become ruler of Monaco under current succession laws that exclude illegitimate children, but will "want for nothing" in his life, the prince said French television on Wednesday.

Albert refused during the television interview to confirm or deny that he had fathered other children with former lovers. AFP

Fiery Najorda lifts Stags over Lions

By Jasmine W. Paya

THE SAN Sebastian Stags heated on the dominant performance of Leo Najorda to forge a 77-74 triumph over the luckless San Beda Red Lions in the NCAA basketball tournament yesterday at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Najorda, the 2003 Most Valuable Player Bowl 15 points and grabbed eight rebounds to lead the Stags to their second straight win.

"I have no problem with Najorda," said coach Rico Valencerina of his 6-foot-4 forward. "He plays good at frame and defense, he rebounds.

In the second game, the Perpetual Help Altas crushed the Jose Rizal U Bombers, 89-42, for a 1-1 card.

Pete Bustos and Abel Khia spearheaded the Altas' charge with a combined 26 points.

The multi-titled Stags, who have been struggling with a young lineup, improved their record to 2-1.

The Lions and the Bombers skidded to their fifth straight loss.

In junior play, Raphael Reyes burned a former Seating keeper as the Staglets stunned the Cubs, 67-65. The defending champions absorbed their first loss in four games.

The results and the line-up:

Senior game

JRU 77— Najorda 15, Nuelo 12, Way 12, Santos 8, Lanaja 7, Aquino 5, Libag 5, Delgado 2, Mendoza 0, Aquino 0, Suguitan 0.

SAN BEDA 74— Abad 17, Palma 15, Quiambao 8, Abarca 8, Santos 8, Ano 6, Perez 5, Bautista 4, Mejia 2, Nuval 2, Reyes 0, Bautista 0, Magpale 0.

Quarters: 18-22, 40-41, 59-58, 77-74.

Third game

PERPETUAL 89— Bautista 19, Mina 17, Bernard 8, Jamil Alpas 8, Bacho 7, Mabanta 6, Mendoza 5, Salangsi, Mabanag 0.

JRU 42— Quiroga 9, Dumalasta 7, Sumaoang 6, Dacio, Aragon, Cuna 4, Nuevo 4, Gutierrez 3, Fernando 2, Valdemoro 0, Sun 0, Ala 0, Reyes 0, Jamero 0.

Quarters: 19-11, 32-22, 62-32, 89-42.

Pumaren siblings out for validation

[illegible] that the high of blaming undesired [illegible] has subsided, he indicated coach Nonoy Pumaren is quick to put things back in perspective.

"It's still a long way for us," said Pumaren, referring defending champion Ateneo [illegible] 78-80, last Sunday.

"Lahat i-think we're that great or we're the invincible. We just played good and they played bad."

It's all business again when the Archers seek their second straight win against the University of the Philippines at 4 p.m. today in the UNAP basketball tournament at the Blue Eagle Gym in Quezon.

While Franz Pumaren is looking to sidelines his strength, younger brother Diedre is out to remove the University of the East's lofty preseason billing when it vies for its first win against the Red Warriors at 2 p.m. The Warriors [illegible] to the FEU Tamaraws, 83-66, last Saturday. Jasmine W. Paya

Missing the old Fiba

THE SAP took a gamble and it lost.

That is all there was to it.

I am referring to the basketball tournament to finish off the 50th birthday celebration by the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) purportedly to compete in the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) tournament.

Before I'll flip out, the BAP brushed aside its responsibilities from the country's Olympic movement and, unofficially handed off a equal portfolio for that ill-fated mission to Seaba delegates.

I commiserate with the coaching staff and the players of that team. They'd been had.

The National Basketball Conference (NBC) got burned backpedaling the fees expenses, among others, of the members of the team.

As often said many times already, good intentions do not always produce good results. The NBC had the right move but for the wrong reason. Good deeds could sometimes backfire. I hope the NBC learned a lesson or two there.

As we all know, the BAP bashed BF many, many times; it was already in Kuala Lumpur ready to play, was barred by the Fiba from playing in the Seaba. Fiba is the world governing body on basketball that normally runs roughshod over the Seaba event.

It didn't matter that the Philippines was the defending champion.

When the Fiba took into account—quite correctly—before allowing away the [illegible] quintet out of Kuala Lumpur was the fact that the BAP was no longer recognized as a FOC member.

Further, adopting a semblance of impartiality, the Fiba likewise rejected a different team still to be sent to Kuala Lumpur by the FOC in join the Seaba, an event team back to back by the Philippines the last two times it was staged.

Had it seem to also reject the FOC request allowing its handpicked crew to play in the Seaba events, I wouldn't quite agree.

In so doing, Fiba had reasoned the FOC before Fiba could even begin its so-called security over the operations of the BAP.

Guilty before trial.

That smacked of arbitrariness.

The prudent thing to do would have been for Fiba to allow the FOC sponsored team to play in the Seaba and next summit in place to bring the BAP case to the court of arbitration of the IOC.

By suspending Philippine participation in a Fiba sanctioned event—the Philippines being a member of good standing in the International Olympic Committee—Fiba inflicted a black eye not only on the sport itself but also on world sports as well.

Cry, Mr. Olympus. Not play, if not sportsmanship, is dead.

With that Fiba decision, wasn't that an irrelevant irony of travelling in the internal affairs of a country?

Fiba should have respected the FOC decision to expel the BAP because, by Christmas, the general assembly of national sports associations had voted 33-2 in favor of ousting the BAP.

The FOC observed and exhausted all means within the purview of its Charter in interpreting the process and was mandated by law to endorse the rule of the majority in deciding the BAP of the country's Olympic status.

I mean, really, what the Fiba is trying to question was the decision of 33 of 35 sympathetic national leaders banishing the BAP from the face of the earth. I said bye-bye.

Now, the Fiba can look into the circumstances behind the BAP expulsion. It has every right. Fiba is a worthy body. Just not stupid.

But to suspend Philippine basketball from further participating in this sanctioned events while Fiba's case has yet to be officially presented before the IOC arbitration committee is like opening the home before the carriage.

The Seaba was available for the bashed all. Seemingly, the Fiba doesn't think that way, too.

In any unswerving pursuit are one but ex aphrodisiac. Seemingly, the present Fiba thinks that way, thirdwise.

I write for the attention of Irwin Gunlando, the Fiba secretary general when Fiba was still the Fiba Olympics, England and nationals.

Laguna Spring in big escape act

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—Sporting Cooking Oil bashed Laguna topped Subic, 87-80, Tuesday night even-prone to record to 3-2 in the 2005 Metropolitan Basketball championship at the San Luis Agrotech Complex here.

Veteran Mac Alonso finely triple to tie the count at 86 with 46.3 seconds left and then sank one of two free throws with five seconds of a second left to clinch the victory for the Oil Masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Laguna Governor Teresita "Gingging" Lazaro.

Orange paces the Southern Conference at 7-2, followed by defending champion Tribo Bagtas (6-2), Mariveles (4-2), Bigan (3-4), Valenzuela (3-4), Subic and Sambutan de Oliveira (0-7).

Fernando Tagaog is on top in the Northern Conference at 6-0, followed by Cauayan (4-2), Laguna, Hamtopan (3-3) and Bagiuo (3-4).

ortigas home depot
DOUBLE DISCOUNT DOWNPOUR SALE
JULY 1-31, 2005
9AM TO 8PM
UP TO 60% DISCOUNT ON SELECTED ITEMS!
ADDITIONAL DISCOUNT ON TOTAL SINGLE TRANSACTION.
ABC
Akari
alpha
Natural
Eurostark
Champs
Davies
Hafele
Yale
Lotus
Nison
Omni
Panasonic
Cool
Moen
Tileron
Julia Vargas Avenue
Opening Soon:
alabang home depot
Alabang Zapote Road, Westgate Alabang

Hunt for al-Qaida fugitives intensified

KABUL—Hundreds of US and Afghan troops searched on Tuesday for four al-Qaida militants who escaped from the main US military detention center in Afghanistan in what is a major embarrassment for American forces.

A police officer and senior Afghan government official identified local mullah and one of the escapees from Bagram Air Base have reoccupied his rural Afghan authorities said this was not so.

Bagram disaster chief Amin Ahmadi said a man answered to a mosque northwest of the base on Tuesday was not one of the escapees but someone with a similar character who had been mistaken for one of the four.

A manhunt involving hundreds of US and Afghan troops backed by helicopters was launched on Monday after what was the first ever escape from the heavily guarded prison camp within Bagram, the largest US base in Afghanistan.

The escape has been a major embarrassment for the US military, which invaded Afghanistan in 2001 to overthrow the Taliban regime for its failure to hand over Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaida leaders responsible for the Sept. 11 attacks.

The military said there would be an investigation.

"It is a very serious matter for us," Lt. Col. Jerry O'Hara said when asked if the escapees might have received inside help from guards. "We will carry out an investigation on the issue certainly."

He has declined to name the men he termed "dangerous enemy combatants" but Afghan officials said they were Syrian Abdullah Ibrahim, Kuwaiti Mohmoud Ahmad Mohammad, Saudi Mahmoud Ahmad al and Libyan Mohammad Hassan.

The US military provided Afghan security forces with photographs of the escapees, which showed bearded men in orange prison uniforms whose ages appeared to range from 20 to 40.

Amin Ahmad, the chief of Bagram district, said he had heard the men might have escaped the base by car.

Detainees at Bagram have included senior al-Qaida suspects arrested in neighboring Pakistan and elsewhere and a US military spokesperson said almost 400 militant suspects were held there.

Monday's escape follows a painful two months for the US military in which it suffered 16 deaths in its worst losses in a single combat operation in Afghanistan.

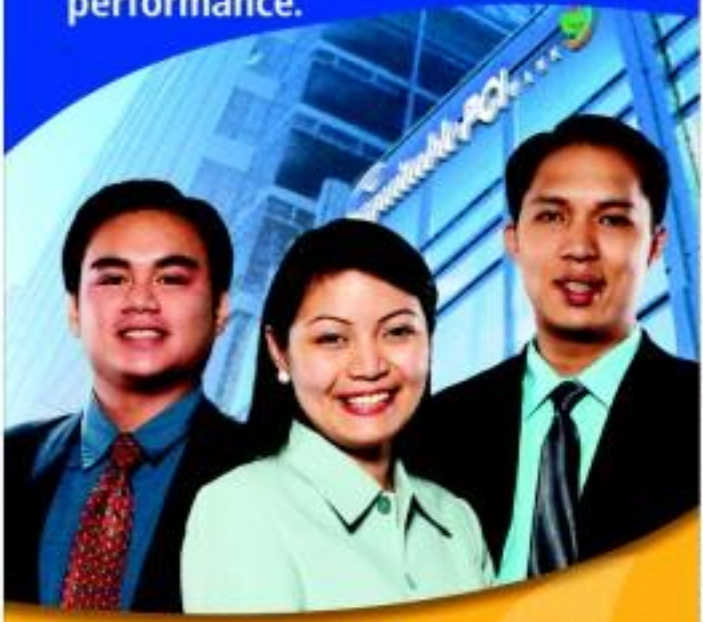
The losses have made 2005 the bloodiest year for US forces in the country and have come amid increasingly violent protests against alleged US desecration of the Koran.

Taliban guerrilla spokesperson Abdul Latif Hakimi called the escape a propaganda disaster for the Americans.

"It's a big embarrassment for them," he said. "In the past, there was the feeling the Americans were so powerful they could work miracles, but this shows clearly they can be vulnerable."

Reuters

A record performance.



Equitable PCI Bank. Your Bank of Choice.

Equitable PCI Bank posted a remarkable performance in 2004, a result of dedicated and extraordinary effort by the Bank to improve products, services and distribution networks, and ensure financial health and profitability. Such performance is nothing short of what depositors, partners and shareholders expect – truly worthy of being your Bank of Choice.

- Net income grew 35% over the previous year to a record P1.9 billion – the highest in six years
- Total resources rose 7% to P51.9 billion, deposits were up 4% to P36 billion and net loans expanded 14% to P1.36 billion
- Capital increased 5% to P4.4 billion with capital adequacy ratio at 14.3% which is comfortably above the regulatory minimum of 10%
- Cash dividends of P436 million were declared, resuming a practice of returning excess capital to shareholders
- The Bank's share price has nearly doubled to P46 over three years, representing a compounded annual return to shareholders of 25% compared to the PHISIX's 16% rise from 2001 to 2004
- Our credit card subsidiary retained its leading position in the industry, achieving a 10% increase in cardholder base and 22% rise in billings
- PCI Leasing and Finance maintained its dominance in the leasing and finance sector with a 37% surge in net income and 46% expansion in total resources
- Our remittance unit sustained its major industry ranking with a 16% increase in pure OFW remittances – the second year in a row of above industry growth
- Our Trust Banking group grew total assets under management to over P100 billion, strengthening its position as the country's third largest asset manager

EquitablePCI BANK

Your Bank of Choice

Member of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation, Maximum Deposit Insurance for Each Depositor P500,000

Shuttle launch 'a g

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.—Nasa will go ahead with the first space shuttle mission since the 2003 Columbia disaster after replacing two damaged heat-resistant tiles on the shuttle Discovery, a spokesperson said on Tuesday.

"The tiles have been replaced. Launch is a go," said Nasa spokesperson Mike Bolin.

The two tiles were damaged when a plastic window cover weighing less than 1 kg fell off Discovery's external tank on the same launch pad at Cape Canaveral in Florida, during the countdown to Wednesday's scheduled launch at 3:51 p.m.

The damage caused by falling debris rang alarm bells because that was precisely the problem that doomed Columbia.

In that case, Columbia's left wing was damaged by a chunk of foam insulation that weighed 0.74 kg.

The damage opened a hole in Columbia's skin that let in superheated gas during re-entry, wrecking the ship and killing all seven astronauts.

"This is a minor repair for us," Benjamin Aitken, Discovery's manager, told reporters after a panel that considered the two damaged tiles was replaced. "They have given us a go for launch."

The shuttle's window covers are removed before launch.

The damage [illegible] hours after Nasa Administrator Michael Griffin, [illegible] says except possibly [illegible] had been airtight [illegible] was ready for launch.

"Everything [illegible] Saturday we [illegible] couple of ... little [illegible] simply put to [illegible] good shape," Griffin [illegible] first to hoped "[illegible] one kind [illegible]

"Can [illegible] we don't know [illegible] this an? Well, [illegible] ones, it's a very [illegible] but everything [illegible] about has been [illegible]

Nasa has [illegible] debris [illegible] ground zero "[illegible] [illegible].

Discovery's [illegible] impingement [illegible] de se reduce [illegible] liftoff and expl [illegible] detected signals [illegible] weekend after.

The plastic [illegible] kind of structural [illegible] Collins, will also [illegible] unveiled supplies [illegible] on the Internet [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

NASA employees gather at the perimeter fence as the base of Pad 39B to take photographs of Space Shuttle Discovery at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla., on Tuesday July 12. Discovery is scheduled for launch on Wednesday.

go' despite mishap

had said all s- ith had weather k and Discovery arth. at 1:48 today, ower evening a ecast show were ed, so we're in ith," Hale said, adding the weather gold ather."

something that about that, on it a rough boat rough business that we know ather."

flown a shuttle olumbia disaster ase on Feb. 1.

mission will rest made to the shut- ulting debris at ntinental prone- ng damaged tiles

under the con- ommission-filled s, deliver much and equipment rnational Space Sta- ecently industrial- ery project... has on the remaining was grounded.

forecasters said launch was good,

two days increased the risk of thunderstorms.

"For our launch forecast, we still get a little more pessimistic on this today," senator officer Kathy Winters said at the countdown clock ticked toward the scheduled launch.

"There's a 40 percent chance of weather prohibiting launch," she told a briefing.

Any thunderstorms must be at least 37 km from the launch to allow a launch, a network of 31 cameras set up to monitor Discovery's ascent as it soars will need close skies to get good images.

The families of the seven astronauts killed in Columbia's fatal break-up offered their support. "We have had 2 1/2 years to reflect daily on the loss of our loved ones as the shuttle Columbia broke apart over Texas on Feb. 1, 2003," the families said in a statement.

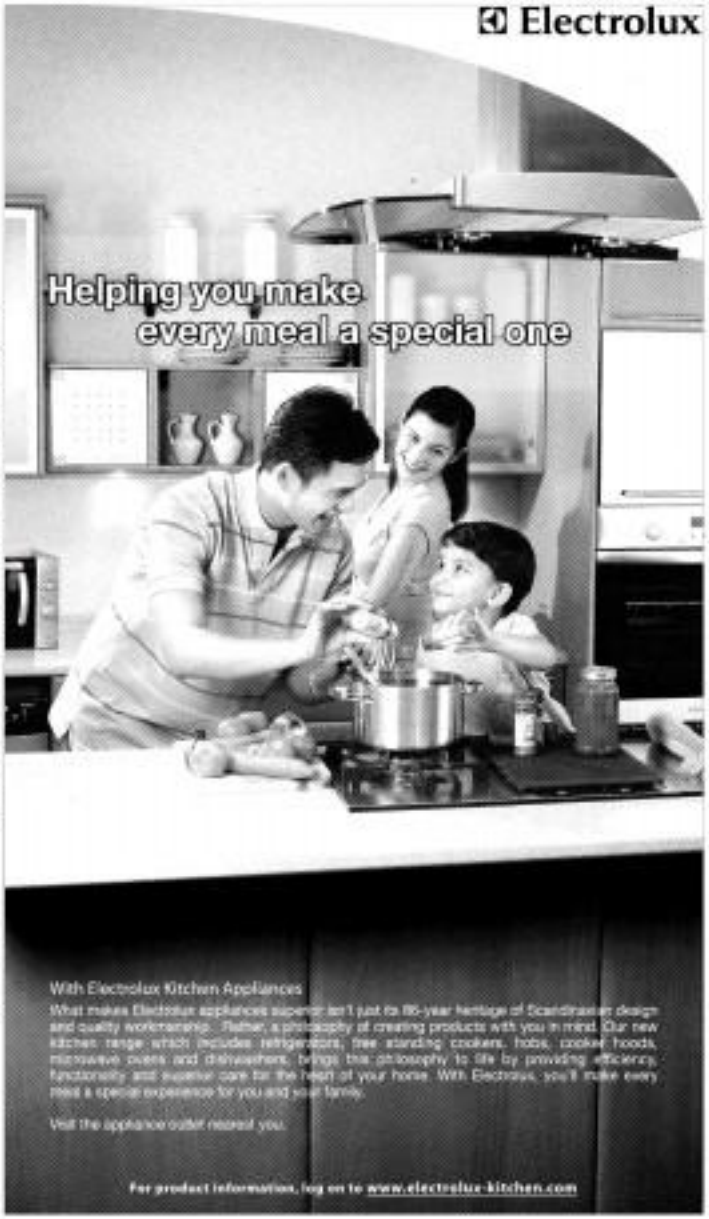
"... We have every confidence that the sacrifice of our loved ones and those that preceded them will be realized for the benefit of mankind. Godspeed Discovery."

If Discovery's ascent is delayed, there can attempt it twice more before having to break for a few days to refuel the craft's onboard power generators.

The current launch window runs from July 13 through July 31. The area can open Sept. 9. *Reuters*

BRIEFS

Accord peace talks



A14
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
THURSDAY, JULY 14, 2005
2005
8/19-20/42
INQUIRER
Vol. 20 No. 219
OPINION

Publisher Isaac Tiaoqui
Editor-in-Chief/CEO Jose Ma. D. Nolasco
Managing Editor Jose Ma. D. Nolasco
Associate Editor Benjamin S. Alabastro
Associate Editor for Readership Rosario R. Bautista
Assistant Editor Antonio T. Enriquez Jr. / Chief, News Day Desk Nicolo Pacheco
Opinion Editor Jaime V. Ongpin
Assistant Editor Francisco S. Tatad Jr.
City Editor Cesar Lim
Associate Editor Juan P. Soriano D.D.
Editorial Consultant Augusto Villalon
Chief Photographer Raul S. Gatbonton
Art & Design Director Lynell A. Valdez

Board of Chairman Marixi R. Prieto
President Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing Manuel R. Romero
Senior Vice President for Corporate Services Cheryl R. Prieto
Vice President for Advertising Elmer R. Ocampo
Vice President for Circulation Elena P. Lansigan

All rights reserved. No part or parts of this publication may be reproduced in any manner or form without the written permission of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc. Unauthorized use may give rise to a civil suit and fine.

Impeachment

IN A SUDDEN turnaround, the opposition has begun looking more seriously at the possibility of impeaching President Macapagal-Arroyo for electoral fraud and other crimes, after rejecting the idea as a trap and dismissing as a trick the impeachment complaint filed by lawyer Oliver Lozano, opposition members of the House of Representatives assigned Sen Juan Ponce Enrile to study this method of removing the President. Zamora has not drawn with the lawyer of the Maocoos to begin the process of rewording and refiling the impeachment complaint.

EDITORIAL

The opposition's decision to explore the impeachment route came after the defection of seven Cabinet members and three senior officials, as well as the call to let the President's resignation from former President Aquino and some business groups, failed to ignite a people power uprising over the weekend. While the reluctance of the Catholic bishops to add their collective voice to that campaign dampened the chances that Ms Arroyo would resign anytime soon, the breakaway of a big faction of the Liberal Party from the administration offered a ray of hope for the success of an impeachment exercise.

Until then, impeachment looked like an impossibility to an opposition that could not bring itself to dig up evidence and dig up facts to build a strong case against Ms Arroyo. It likes the members of the opposition would do non count heads and well that they would always be outscored by the majority. They claimed that impeachment was nothing more than a numbers game, betraying their lack of faith in the institution they serve and in the capacity of their colleagues to rise above self-interest, like the congressmen did during the impeachment of Joseph Estrada. And because they did not want to work so hard to get her out of Malacañang, they wanted the people to do it by marching in the streets. In other words, they wanted the President's head without even dancing for it.

Now after failing to gather the kind of crowds that toppled two previous administrations, opposition lawmakers seem ready to bring their case against the President to where it should have been near right from the beginning, which is Congress. For this is the body in which the Constitution has given the power to try, impeach and remove an erring president.

It is a reversal of what happened four and a half years ago when the people finished what Congress had begun. But that came only after the pro-Estrada senators sabotaged the legal process by their successive pointsandclicks.

Our legislators, from both sides of the political divide, would do well to learn this lesson in mind when they start hearing the impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo, if it comes to that. This will be their second chance to prove that the process laid down in the Constitution for the removal of a president can work. It is a political process all right, but it should not be a partisan one or it becomes a useless exercise that mocks the fundamental law.

Administration lawmakers, in particular, should not forget that this is the forum the President herself has picked for her defense against charges of electoral fraud. On Friday, she challenged her political foes to "take your grievances to Congress," saying she was "willing to submit" to its judgment so long as due process is followed.

But the burden of making the Constitution and our laws work does not lie with Congress and our lawmakers alone. Once the impeachment case is brought to Congress, the administration should help ensure that the truth comes out and that justice is served in full. And above anything else that means that every agency of government should help in the investigation of the case. The administration can do a lot to make the whole process credible by helping Congress do its job instead of obstructing the course of justice. It can begin by producing the witnesses who can answer the many interesting questions arising from the contents of the taped conversations between former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano and a variety of personalities, including the President. And the first in line should be Garcillano himself.

In that asking no touch of the administration? Is that like asking the President to convict herself? Keeping Garcillano and company hidden will be no different from keeping the second envelope in the Erap plea trial sealed.

'Numero Tres' as 'Numero Dos'?

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"VICE presidents are about as useful as a wet's fifth seat," Harry Truman snapped when promised to work a joint dubbed as a political dead end.

But vehicle rotating at the Speaker's office, this 34th US vice president, was nominated to proceed "quickly and quietly" to the White House. There, a somber Eleanor Roosevelt told Truman the president had just died. He took his seat the next evening.

We, too, had cancer this 11 months. Vice President Teofisto Guingona resigned effective 30:01, of to set President Manuel Roxas' colleague from a heart attack in Hongkong. In 1957, Ramon Magsaysay's plane smashed into Cebu's Mount Mantangad. Vice President Carlos Garcia, then in Barbados, was called back and sworn in.

Now, Vice President Noli de Castro is positioning himself, in case the constitutional "spare tire" role will be triggered.

Hunter's first trip to look—and sound—as Mother's One. But he heeds. 1986 Republican vice presidential candidate Judy Kemp's counsel: "Keep your mouth shut, your head down, and don't say the one word in." In so doing, he's dumped the bad luck job of asking each citizen: "How is the President's health?"

De Castro realizes the embattled President holds government losers. She remains Commander-in-Chief. She has immunity and remains constitutionally "sacred" as the president. Her opponent has 40 million bosses but a rare president must hand 40-million bosses, plus one, to pardon use Robert Humphrey.

Hunter's Jue becomes Numero Uno, if and when President Macapagal-Arroyo steps down. Resignation is not forthcoming. So is death, or voluntary resignation, as demanded by republic critics like Concepcion Aquino or ex-Sen Jovito Salonga. Or by impeachment.

But the Estrada camp and the Left demand ouster of both Ms Arroyo and De Castro. They'd then be next in line to the presidency, keep the Cabinet intact. "Make no mistake about it," frowns columnist Manuel L. Quezon III on this. "Neither the military Left, nor the Estrada forces, nor even military adventurists had bonded by like Constitutionalists."

In short, shoot the opposition and raid the Museum begin to the 1.8 billion dust. Ragang Marcoses. Malacañang pledged to make peace today? And why did the one million protesters pledged last week by former Erap minister Dante de Morales, never appear?

This clean-sing was inevitable, given this Constitutional room, to the February 1986 poll. It's pervert of voters and their ballots, and "No peace" sound yes. "A countenance only formalizes the moral consensus that people have already rendered." Filipino scott are that consensus under on the arm of an elected appointed leaders.

In Debt analysis, "People go the other way." Urban Poor Associates reveals that people "are tired of being used as pawns in the elite's war" that don't address their basic needs. "The victory of our people are right," adds Stella Padilla Maggay from the Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture. "They spare a politics reduced to a contest for power the poorest one set of results and numbers."

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines has come down four-square for reforms within the Constitution. That reinforces succession and for Cotes is discovering in that more "friends" than he realized.

Peace sovereignty leap dragged from the Palace. But impeachable "new Daddies" turned up. "We are open to Both," hopes Manu's vice Jinki Manuel Luis' said. And is Sen. Franklin Drilon one of them?

In former presidents, Drilon is Numero Pro in the constitutional pecking order, But what if Numero Dos and Dos were scrubbed? Then Numero Pro would be acting president. He'd convene special elections within 45 days.

Drilon presents dangers he is enflamed by this "windows of opportunity." Only idealists, he says, led to his and his Liberal Party's calamities in the President, without consulting Manila Bruce Lim lenders and other major party leaders.

He has denied he sought the vice presidency and excretes secretary post to cover meetings with Dr Cantos. He protests reading between-the-lines stirring at meetings where Cabinet members dubbed Drilon "quite new courage" to the President.

Mandaluyong Cong Benjamin Magsaysay Jr. was late. But how does Vice President Drilon grab you? "Has grandeur? It has such a nice ring to it!" Geraldine Ferraro said in agreeing to run on the 1984 Democratic Party's candidates.

"Throw us spur," Bogtok the riders of say-in texts' her evening ambition," Macbeth advised. But, said Drilon, "Ambition is misplaced ambition was his spur. Indeed, brothels are built with the bricks of ultimates.

Be it impeded national corruption charges, including the "rumor" that the President influenced the Supreme Court's temporary re-straining order on the way? Last that bumper he power refused the Senate president is capable of treason?

"No responsible member of the bar ever dared in the past to suggest that senates, not even the President, can issue a big blue of jus. Jurisdiction," Sen Joker Arroyo engaged.

In ruling on a case brought by the opposition, 11 justices (86 percent) voted for it TRO and (two 14 percent) voted against. In the Senate, where the President twisted arms, she got 86 percent," Arroyo said. Point: Courts must feel laws down, "the most that distance thatthand Marcos got was 77 percent of the vote," Arroyo recalls.

Who said that the vice presidency resembles the last cookie on the plate(?) Everybody wants it, but won't take it. So the formula—if it comes does." That's Drilon's hand on the plate. Cousin of Lacson, Villar and other major he lurks behind?

* * *

E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph

Magic

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

NOBODY the Cory magic!—people are asking. She asked GMA to resign but Erdie, but her call seems to have gone unheeded. Unlike in the past when her voice took on the aspect of God's Truth to many a crowd of the powered, according to her chirped. So is the Cory magic gone?

Well, to answer that, you have to answer how the magic got to it in there in the first place.

Cory is not the most charismatic person in the world, certainly not when she first took office, a public life for many decades before standing there was not from personal magnetism but from the mystique she has developed over the years from leading crusades against tyrants. If I recall right, the Marcos people spoke of her as derisively then as the GMA people speak of her now. "Never in the history of the Philippines," spoke by her own admission (the people who used the modifier "plain," of course, having no understanding of what it takes to be a housewife), who had had nothing to do with politics until she took up the cudgels for her husband. Indeed, as far as I went, she had lost by way of public exposure than fluent. Beam has had a public life, however, it's been in entertainment rather than politics—which in this country is barely distinguishable.

Cory was part of how when she fought Marcos. She was never tainted by the failures of regime, she had opposed it from the start. Her striking might have sprung from a personal motive, as such juries for her husband, but that striking had encompassed the nation's aura. An empathetic identification encapsulated in the phrase, "Tiisin mo ng ngiti." Nimoy's death had been the death of us all. Cory's fight for justice was the resurrection of us all.

My image of the Cory magic remains that of one early morning in January 1986 when she delivered a speech during the height of the "dagit elections." Her speech was broadcast on Radio Veritas, and you could hear her voice bursting across the length of Quezon Avenue from the radio sets that were collectively tuned to that station. Cory spoke in a monotone, probably in her voice coach's dictates. But no matter, it was the voice of Truth, and it spoke louder and far more eloquently than Marcos', notwithstanding Marcos' baritone which was accompanied by karate chops in the air and by Imeldific heroic "Chariots of Fire" theme booming in the background. Even the prominent that piled the arenas there where they stood.

That's where the Cory magic lies. What makes Cory's voice less than thunderous today is that she is tainted with Gloria. She—and Joma Cardinal Sin—gave GMA life and, barring death or, sure nothing wrong with GMA even when GMA was wreaking the grossest iniquities. Cory said nothing when GMA dreamed to run again after running on the grave of Joie Read she would not because she was the source of that economy's debt overruns. Cory said nothing when GMA unleashed gold, goons and guns to crush a second term. She was illness-ill in 1969, if in her memory serves of the three E's. Cory said nothing when the tape of GMA's conversation with Garci came out. When Cory did come out to speak, it was to scare those who have had enough of GMA not to resort to unconstitutional means, as through lying, shaming and stealing were constitutional. When she did come out to speak, it was to say she was too old to lead another People Power.

Can you blame the people if they at least believed the last?

There had been occasions in the past when Cory—as indeed Cardinal Sin—tried to rally the country to their cause and failed. Cory did so in 1995 when she sought to stop the Senate from rejecting the US Bases Treaty, summoning the crowds to gather at the Luneta to fight history. No one went, except Richard Gordon, who seems mentally invariably would later wrap the holes of what others had planned and go on to head the SBMA. He tried to do the same thing, summoning the crowd to gather at the Luneta to protest then Sen Joker Arroyo's move to impeach Erap. Crowds—expressed of course no prizes. No one came either, except his sidekick, the inconsistently fine-natured Bishop Ireneo Villegas.

Cory has the right cause this time, but the wrong timing. She has the pure voice at last, but the impure record to match. Had she come out sooner when her prestige had turned into the very thing she fought in Erba I and II—not least by bringing back cheating and jueteng, the two things she decried in Erba I and II—her words have been the voice of heaven itself. As it is today, she was like what the Bible says about the one Wahl Nation said. Juan Ponce Enrile played to Erba I. Ramos and Enrile had teamed against Marcos, but for reasons the public could never be sure of. They had seen the set that was the Marcos regime, but not after having wallowed with it and driven it to its ruin.

The people's attitude toward those days were made clear when they drove Cory instead of either one of them to lead the country. The gathering at Club Filipino had no choice but to make Cory the head of the power latent that resided in the people. And Enrile thought he'd temporarily cozied it—though Cory herself had been in Cebu when Erba I took place. She was the symbolic leader of Erba, she was the moral leader of Erba. Not so today, she is the farthest Ramos of today.

Truth is the most magical thing there is. It has a way at Cleopatra de Jesus put it when her own husband, Andres Soriano, was murdered by Emilio Aguinaldo's henchmen, of coming out like the leaders of the deceased from the depths of the sea. Not as half-truth. Half-truth is the most fascinating thing there is. It has a way of hiding things even as it reveals them, and you are never sure if it hides the important things even as it reveals the superficial ones.

Truth was the magic of Cory then. Half-truth is the magic of Cory now.

LGU phenomenon

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cavanaman

THE CENTER that once held showed ten days for yesterday's opposition rally in Makati failed to draw even close to the 1986 million or one-million constant. Commentators throughout the day brought down the target assembly size to 500,000, which is creditable since like the actual Quiet, There were obvious attempts to pick up the crowds by flashing false numbers. In a 10-to-1 ratio amongst Lidlit folks was heard over dzRH the other day announcing that Gloria President Cory Aquino would be joining them. Boos on stage. That didn't work. Then the call for Erap to join from the pro-Edsa 1 days into purveyors of dissent given his elevated rating; and civic leader David Tobias thought of inviting Raja Lupa, the Aquino's nephew and nephew of the dentist. Boo again and outright. The Total Debacle. Mostly for the opposition's daily media deportment. Which should put the citizenry on guard of many disinformation and downright lies ensues.)

* * *

Yesterday's rally was designed to replay the old rallies or carried out against the dictatorship in 1983-86, complete with all the banners and would-be makeup. Here some buildings. But it was a replay that's making Boy's scout jamboree proportioned did not materialize. My feeling is that while President Macapagal-Arroyo does not enjoy a lot of popularity in Metro Manila, as indicated in the surveys, the people in the provinces do not want street protests as they realize the economic damage such rallies can cause to our economy and stability. The people elections. It went to prove the truth of the accusations against the rallyists that they are composed of professional protests, which is impeachment. This is the populist position that has now galled across the land, support the constitutional process, which still badly constitutes the truth.

* * *

I appeared as a panelist the other evening at a National Broadcasting Network (NBN) forum moderated by lawyers Greg Raymundo, chief of government operations of the Philippine Star. Among four members present were Three were Marites Gorre Espina of News, Editor, Ana Peters of Landlaw, Banaynay Boston Center of Blackstone who is also the president of the League of Municipalities, and Gerardo V. Calderon of engineer, Rizal. We were joined by senior Lakas Rep. Leopoldo Bataoil of Antique. I have confess that the forum was encouraged in response to the observations I had to do so much to Bataoil's speeches not to him that the local government units, together with the political parties, allied with GMA, were considered the main pillar of support for her dumped against them are elections. Bataoil's response is that some members of civil society, business and the academe. I have been watching the recent development which I term the "LGU phenomenon," such has started to how the LGUs have been coming out and rallied on their behalf. They have come to judge the President's fate, not civil society and its allies. I suggested to Bataoil that the reason that is may well be he governors and, time, to the mayors, vice governors and members. Bataoil's Sally Perez, Gilda's Gloria Garcia, Bambino Leyte's Roberto Vergara-Lerma and Bulacan's Josefa de Leon.

* * *

The reasons are the NBN panel stressed that our reasons for the LGUs' all-out-and-in support for GMA is that she trusted them with well. They pointed out that she entrusted to them all their share from the internal revenue allotment (IRA) that were withheld by previous administrations. Representative Javier knows about this only too well, for Congress passed the Local Government Code that enshrined the IRA. Moreover, Arroyo's Executive Order (EO) 378 signed in March a lot of support, including her physical presence during valedictory in Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales, Aurora,

A solution is not that simple

TO BE CRISP, a war as simple as it seems. In an age of frustration, temporary solutions become very attractive. Equally tempting is an approach that compromises. It is in fact a context, a climate for which a cure is yet to be discovered.

Our nation faces not only a political challenge but very deep social and economic challenges. Some have argued that the political side is the main cause. In my opinion, the three aspects are all interconnected. Our solution has fully embraced and tolerated the current political structure. Poverty has widened the country into opportunists and sheer exploitation.

In truth, no one can really save the Sea unless he or she all responsible for the system that we have created. Should everyone in office who contaminated with election officials resign? Is going today the work of just an individual, or does it only flourish with the general consent of society? Is this a case in which if the head is removed, the monster will die, or will it lead to a new off spring?

We have been on this road several times. Perhaps, we have all reaps taken the easy path. Maybe we have simply chosen the quick option. Surely, we have always thought that the problem is theirs and we are not part of the crisis. We may be praying for God's will to be done, but in our own prayer, do we not look at ourselves and see our resistance? Do we not acknowledge our own weaknesses and our propensity to do what is wrong?

The Problem is a reflection of our society. There are indeed as many problems that we are facing, yet we do not have the time or resources to suffer in their challenges as there are. Some of us are preoccupied with our good the grave. Most of us do not have the time to worry about tomorrow for we are still wondering if we will have food on our table today. We all fail to see that the good of the country will translate to something else is good for us, as an simple recipe somehow in a way of thinking that always places ourselves and our interests ahead of everyone else's. Political, social and economic—we have serious problems in all of these.

The President's resignation could only become a worthwhile sacrifice if with this action, our cries would begin to stir who are really not and the problems we are all facing. It would be another creation of foolish if, at the end of the day, we would still think that the problem lies outside ourselves.

—DR. ANGEL C. DE DIOS,
associate professor and director
of Undergraduate Studies,
Department of Chemistry
Georgetown University,
37th and O Sts., NW,
Washington, D.C. 20057

Scandal puts Muslims in bad light

TO BE IDEALISTIC stepped up by the rapid conversations allegedly between President Macapagal-Arroyo, the candidate, and Virgilio Garcillano, the election commissioner, has not only rocked the nation; it has also put in a bad light the Muslim people.

The crude slap he dressed to insult the President, but it also casts doubt on the integrity of the Muslim electorate, with Alonto the true we can be bought. The fact is that Mr. Arroyo lost in not a few towns and cities in the autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

There is no denying that there was a "wholesale delivery of votes" in many parts of the autonomous region. But this was an "exception" that was done not only in Muslim Mindanao. Elsewhere in the Philippines, we know of "cognate votes." It hurts to admit, but this shame is our own embarrassment makes.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front has issued a statement that the peace negotiation with the Arroyo administration will not be derailed by the tape and lasting scandal. This merely indicates what the MILF leaders show out hope in this country. This also indicates that the MILF leaders is a closer to achieving peace with the Arroyo administration despite the perfect violations of the ceasefire agreement.

Bringing the administration to give in the tape scandal reaches of the administration of not to plan leaders, but this is not reason enough to derail the peace talks which both have something under the Arroyo administration than under the past administrations. We hope that this promising outlook for peace will be sustained and will not be derailed by the destabilization moves.

—MIRA DE ROSA,
moroscribe@yahoo.com

LETTERS

Why Rome fell

MY FILIPINO friend in Gibraltar complained his manuscript of Historical and Literary "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," he said, "I have described the triumph of barbarism and religion." "No Gibbon" my answer, almost where on the tenant of the fall of the empire. The religion he was referring to was, of course, Christianity. So I cannot agree with Dr. Julian Mahanan (PDI, 6/6/05) that views support the empire. Of course, there were views in the ancient world but probably not as prevalent as they are in the Philippines today.

It is a rather odd coincidence that the colonels first name, Julian, was the name of a 4th century Roman emperor who tried to restore Paganism to the empire. Unfortunately, he was killed while leading his troops in battle in Persia, after a reign of only three years. He was a brilliant and very young commander, and he fought in the head of his army which destroyed him. Gibbon tells us.

In that era, Christianity was taking over the empire and various Christian sects were fighting each other for supremacy. Romans were losing their martial spirit and military skills. Instead they loafed around in the baths and watched gladiators fight to the death while the barbarians were taking over Europe, North Africa and Persia too.

All this is documented with skill and power and great scholarship in the classic work I volumes of Gibbon's "Decline and fall."

—ROBERT BASIL,
robbasil@vivldsun.com

Philippine Navy Day: a farce

THE PHILIPPINE Navy celebrated its 107th founding anniversary last May 20 at the Department of National Defense headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City with Defense Secretary Avelino J. Cruz as guest of honor and speaker. The celebration was a farce.

May 20 marks the centenary of the "Peacock" an abandoned Spanish small navy boat, from Commodore George Dewey in Cavite. Emilio Aguinaldo after the naval battle of Manila Bay. The navy now was a deception charismatic of the double-standing anniversary, who have entered the accounts of Philippine wizards (including the Philippines) in Ambassadors of the United States' grand design to occupy and colonize the Philippines.

The issue of commemorating the Philippine Navy founding on anniversary was referred in the past to the National Historical Institute. The NHI recommended June 23, 1898, the day Aguinaldo issued the decree creating four departments including the Navy. A copy of the title commerce was furnished the flag officer in command.

In spite of this, Vice Adm. Ernesto de Leon chose to celebrate the Navy's foundation on May 20. The insistence to commemorate that important event on that day's an Filipino and indicative of a colonial mind and can be classified as an intensive suggestive of a "foreign agent." The government should investigate De Leon to check on his loyalty to the Republic of the Philippines.

—CAPT. ARTEMIO
A. GATPO II, PN (ret.),
4045, Cavite City
(Memorial Station)
3414-A, Sol Amarilla St.,
Carlobal, Cavite City 4100

Fare discounts unfair to drivers

LETTING the student fare discount on boundary, teachers and minister is a good idea. This is just giving justice to the drivers who for years have been helping commuters, young and old, every day.

An earning of P 100 to P200 a day is not commensurate to the efforts and risks drivers go through as they ply their route. And that amount is not even enough to provide for the needs of the family in the face of the increasing prices of prime commodities, house rentals and tuition fees. Therefore, more of what they earn goes to fuel and "boundary" the amount they must pay the owner of the vehicle each time they use the vehicle. Only a very little amount remains with the drivers. At times, nothing is left to all for them.

The life of a passenger (senior citizen) is much better than that of a driver. Yet, passengers enjoy the benefit of a fare discount from poor drivers.

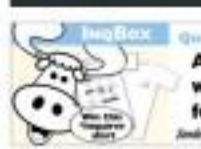
I hear many Filipinos even thought that the discounts given to students and senior citizens are not even subsidized by the government, or by the operators, or by the proponents of the fare discount? It is the poor drivers who fully assume the cost of the discounts.

Likewise, most operators are on the dot in increasing the jeepney fare boundary once the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board approves a fare increase.

A few kilos in favor of our sector's poor is nothing if all prices are not regulated.

—EUGENE DAZELLE,
Sampaloc, Manila, Alday

Ang hamon sa mga pangulo, mula Edsa Uno:
LAYAS SA PALASYO!
plus
Exclusive: Mga apo ng Sultan ng Sulu mula sa China
Ngayong Huwebes, alas 10 n.g. sa ABC
INQ INQ TV TV



INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Slaughter of soft-shelled turtles stops

By Gil Francis G. Arevalo
Correspondent, Albay

THE SOFT-SHELLED turtles that nestwith in Barangay Minto in Guinobatan, Albay love to partake of during drinking sprees are now spared the trip to the butchers.

Since 2003, when a story about the slaughter of the creatures was published in the Inquirer, local and national government agencies have joined hands to stop marauding people from catching, selling and killing softshelled turtles, according to barangay chair Isidel Orano.

"At last, we have already stopped these culprits, for they know that we're monitoring them and we're guarding the San Francisco River well," Orano said. The soft-shelled turtle thrive in the river.

The turtles' population has already doubled as a result of continued conservation efforts of the Protected Area Wildlife and Coastal Zone Management Service of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (PAWLZMS-DENR), the municipal council of Guinobatan, and the barangay council.

Medicinal

A soft-shelled turtle used to be sold for P600 apiece. Hunters believed it was an aphrodisiac source, but residents and some people bought them to serve as pets.

Others valued them not only as food but also for medicinal purposes. The soft-shelled turtle's meat is said to cure fever, convulsion and other ailments.

Orano said that since villagers had already stopped the hunting, selling and killing of the turtles, it was now time to declare the barangay a sanctuary of the creatures in Albay.

Myrna Bedia, DENR-Zone chief, agreed, saying the reptiles have found a conducive habitat in the San Francisco River, which reaches Bato town in Camarines Sur. The turtles' presence in Minto was discovered in 1997.

"Now that that ... it is only in this barangay in the to our record and monitoring is concerned, that thousands of soft-shelled turtles dwell harmoniously with the environment, thereby making this place their sanctuary," Bedia said.

Orano and some students researchers and tourists had requested that place not to eat the turtles.

Most of them were surprised, as they could not help consuming the soft-shelled meats to, the main turtle because of its long, elongated neck, he said. Local residents find nutrition it for a main turtle.

"Some come here to eat, so please our resolution is to sell at least one turtle to them [for] souvenir and eventually their pet," he said.

Dilleo believed that it can save chronic malaria, dysentery, anemia bleeding, weakness during convalescence, and abnormal absence of menstruation, he said.

Some of those who have taken

SOFT-SHELLED—turtle found in Barangay Minto in Guinobatan, Albay.

the turtles for pets have been strongly advised to return them to the river.

Lorenzo Organia, 58, one of those who used to own turtles, said that the find found it hard to accommodate visitors who wanted to see the two 13-kilo soft-shelled turtles. After two years, he was petrified.

Protection

She said she was now supportive of the local council's plan to protect the turtles.

"It further ensures the safety of the animals, the barangay council, in coordination with the municipal tourism office, plans to put up a fence or wall in certain portions of the San Francisco River to provide an elusive area for the turtles and prevent fish from disturbing them, Orano said.

Confining the turtles will give visitors the chance to encounter them more closely, he said.

"Because they're reproducing vigorously, soon livestock animals like chicken and plants within the area will be restored to its sanctuaries," Orano said.

Soft-shelled turtles also feed on frogs, crustaceans, worms and various kinds of insects.

Bedia, however, vowed not for concerns. Putting up a fence just to confine the turtles may also endanger them after one year, she said.

The turtles, she said, should live in their natural habitats. Limiting their movements would affect overpopulation, which is not good for sustainable utilization, she said.

"It's up to the soft-shelled turtles to look for another place once their current food other resources of food. He will be avoiding competition among them. If there's no food, then the other turtles could look for another place to find food."

IN THE KNOW

Soft-shelled turtles

Scientifically named Pelochelys cantorii, the soft-shelled turtle belongs to the family of the Trionychidae and weighs 15 to 20 kilos.

It has a smooth, soft and rubbery carapace with a leathery border in a pancake. Its head is large, has greenish spots and its nostrils are similar to pipes. It has webbed feet, a long neck like a snake, and strong hind claws with sharp tips at the top.

Its body [illegible] and has [illegible] and [illegible] of the leg.

Scientists [illegible] that [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Across the NATION

Siege of Malacañang in Cebu stopped

By Doreen Nagallanes
INQ Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—An otherwise peaceful holding of a series of protest actions in Cebu was marred yesterday when a melee broke out between militant protesters and government troops guarding the Malacañang sa Sugbo along the port area here.

Two firemen and a soldier were injured after being hit by stones lobbed by protesters during the chaotic unit. Savages rally near the vicinity of the Malacañang sa Sugbo located at the Sabang Pier in Cebu City at past 2:30 p.m.

Aside from the stone-throwing incident, SWAT policemen used tear gas while the firemen used water cannons to stop members of the militant groups Bagong Mymanong Makabayan (Bayan) and Bangon Filipinas who stormed and forcibly entered the gate of the Malacañang sa Sugbo, the President's official residence and office in the South.

The militant groups had already broken through the barricade made out of steel railings and barbed wires at corner Mc. Briones and M.J. Cuenco Avenue when firemen used their water cannons to blast them.

Supt. Rhoderick Mariñel, chief of the Security Service Group, said the protesters hit back by throwing stones at the soldiers and policemen, positioned behind the barricade.

Mariñel said the SWAT men also used tear gas when the protesters insisted in going inside the presidential building.

Pfc Dilbert J. Ramos Medina was hit in the forehead while another fireman, PO2 Joel Cedoy was injured in the mouth. An infantry personnel identified only as S. Olidan was also hit in the body.

Paul Burlongue, Bayan General Hesus president, however claimed that the stones did not come from them but from the camp of the policemen.

He said he sees just throwback the stones at the policemen.

In fact, he said, some of their members were also slightly injured after they were hit by the stones.

He strongly condemned the police for not using tear gas, saying that the policemen used the style of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos just to stop them in representing their anniversary against the President.

After the melee, the protesters went to Colon Street where they peacefully ended their protest action with a rally at about 3 p.m.

Rodriguez claimed some 2,000 joined the rally, but the policemen said they were only about 200 protesters.

There were around 150 policemen from the combined forces of the Regional Mobile Group and Cebu City Police Office (CCPO), plus 50 Air Force and another 50 Army personnel, who were deployed in the vicinity of the Malacañang sa Sugbo and the adjoining Plaza Independencia Park and Cebu City Hall.

A separate rally by the Lakas ng Mana Anti sa Pamoo Dawatia Kontra si 4 p.m. yesterday was participated in by about 200 protesters. They dispersed peacefully short by before 6 p.m.

While at 6 p.m. last night, members of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ of Pastor Apollo Quiboloy also held a prayer rally in support of the Arroyo at the Capitol grounds.

Mr Arroyo claims a stronghold in Cebu which gave her a one million margin of victory against the late actor Fernando Poe Jr.

Her critics said the President rigged the results of the elections and was caught in a wiretapped conversation discussing how to cheat in the elections with former election official Virgilio Garcillano.

PROTESTERS cry as brawl into the Malacañang in Cebu but are stopped by barbed wires and syphalanx of policemen. LYNNE MOSCOSO/INQ

Bicol solon sees change of allies in Congress

NAGA CITY—Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte has predicted a realignment of political forces in the House and Senate when Congress resumes its session on July 25.

"The activities of the House is partisan-oriented but in the absence of any opposition party where they belong has still especially align themselves in their individual capacities with the majority coalition," he said.

"But those who shall leave the administration coalition, regardless of whether they align with the opposition parties or become independents, are expected to lose their chairmanships if not membership in committees, to the extent that they abstained such positions as part of the coalition of the majority," Villafuerte said.

He declined it conceded that those who no longer believe in waging with the parties supporting the administration stake their positions often.

"This is not the time for considering this feuding or bickering. Particularly for those who questioned the legitimacy of the administration of GMA or expressed skepticism on her ability to govern, they should now make an unsupervised stand," Villafuerte said.

"It the crucial point in our national life, we, who belong to the administration coalition, should decide whether we will stay with the administration bolter or not. We cannot afford allies who speak with forked tongues...," he said.

Villafuerte said he also concurred with the policy statement articulated by House Majority Leader Rep. Prospero Nograles that the political complexion in the House should not seem to be removed from their committee chairmanships or committee membership if such committees but should rather sacrifice out of deliberate, resign.

Jaime Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Militants rally vs GMA in Visayas

MILITANT groups led protest rallies in key cities and towns in the Visayas yesterday, coinciding with the national protest in Makati City demanding for President Arroyo's resignation.

At least 2,000 participated in the protest action in Iloilo, nearly 1,000 in Bacolod, about 1,000 each in Roxas and Iloilo, about 500 in Tacloban and another 500 in Cebu.

In Iloilo City, the protesters led by Bagong Mymanong Makabayan (Bayan) and the Anyos Resign Movement-Panay marched to the city's main streets before holding a rally at the Iloilo Rotary Amphitheater.

The protest was joined by farmers, students, lawyers, religious groups, government employees and students along with opposition groups under the United Opposition (UNO-Iloilo).

The protesters broke in to applause and cheers as activists performed a skit on the "Hello Garci" tape.

The Bacolod protesters marched to the city's public plaza to demand for the ouster of President Arroyo in a rally organized by the Negros Movement for Moral Regeneration composed of members of the Bayan and the 992 Movement.

A prayer vigil and candle parade, led by members of Bangon Filipinas Movement and Bayan Negros, drew a crowd of only about 500 at the Bacolod Public Plaza Sunday night.

Participating groups at the rally, although united in calling for Mr Arroyo's resignation, differed on who should assume power, with Bayan secretary general Jo-Ilin Lerry Gelle reiterating that his group favors a takeover by a revolutionary government, while the Bienvenido Lingson Jesus Isabelo Delvalle said the next leader of the country will really depend on who the people will choose following a people power revolution. Reports from Joey Gabieta, Felipe Galvan, Raj Padilla, Carla Gomez, Nestor Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau

Environmentalists join calls to oust Gloria

LUCENA CITY—Environment activists joined the growing chorus calling for the immediate resignation of embattled President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

"We are joining rallies and protest actions to denounce the most unpopular corrupt and anti-environment President and to expedite her removal from office," Clemente Bautista, of the Ekumen People's Network for the Environment and an Ifugao convener, said in a statement.

Enraged is the first broad environmental alliance calling for Mr Arroyo to step down.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo has failed greatly as a President in the aspect of environmental protection and natural resource management. Her unscrupulous acts only imperil our country's natural life-support system and endangers the state of our environment. Ifun GMA must immediately step down," according to Bautista. Joelle Hallar I. Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Words mean a lot for proponents of population bill

BACOLOD CITY—People concerned about the growing population of the country as well as the maternal and child health situation, are again pushing an older measure in Congress.

But what time they wanted was to be using the term "reproductive health."

They would now be pushing the passage of House Bill 3773 or the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Management Act of 2005. This would replace HB 4134 or the Reproductive Health Care Act.

HB 3773 is a measure which bans euphemisms," said Presidential Doctor, Department of Interior and Local Government director in the Cordillera.

"There are so many things unacceptable. But the truth is, many local government units resorted to some non-scientific family management and reproductive health programs but they counted because no information or law is available to guide them. This [HB 3773] is a good start," Dorotan said.

Dr. Myrna Cabotaje, Department of Health Cordillera director, said the term "reproductive health" had been associated, particularly by the Catholic Church, with abortion.

Cabotaje said the new bill sought to make it the concept of reproductive health more acceptable.

"We should be open-minded about this," she said.

HB 3773 defines reproductive health as the "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes." French Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Schools become new fields of battle for Army, NPA

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—The new thrusts for the government's war against insurgency in Central Luzon are schools.

Maj. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, commander of the Army's 7th Infantry Division, said the military's Peace education) Program in the Academe (Pape), which started in June, would "instill among the participants an awareness on the relevance of peace for national growth and development."

Tolentino said lectures under the Pape have been held in five of 36 private and public colleges and universities in the area.

Among the seven provinces in Central Luzon, it is in Bulacan where communist rebels are most active, according to recent reports by the military's Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom).

Pape's speakers include three former NPA rebels and soldiers from the 7th Civil Affairs Unit, the 702nd Infantry Brigade and 56th Infantry Battalion.

"They have returned to the fold of the law and are now active peace advocates, lecturers on various topics in counter-insurgency and the government's peace initiatives, and organizers of grassroots organizations," Tolentino said, referring to Jun Alonzo and two former rebels identified only as Mylene and Joy.

According to Tolentino, Alonzo was the founding chair of the Citizens' Organization for Peace and Security (Cope Philippines), which he said is a "nationwide anti-communist organization."

Alonzo, Tolentino said, was the organizer of the Bat Labor Partisan Unit (LPU) of the Ellicsong Mayo I Labor and a political officer of the Cebu Interior Party Committee of the CPP/NPA and the National Democratic Front.

Alonzo, who surrendered in 1987, is the president of the speakers' bureau of the National Alliance for Democracy (NAD), an umbrella organization of more than 20 anti-communist groups, Tolentino said.

Mylene and Joy entered the NPA while in their teens. They also surrendered in 1987.

The Pape team interacted with faculty members and students of the Bernardo College of Arts and Trade and the Aztec College of Science and Technology in Balanga town; Bulacan State University in Malolos City; Bulacan National Agricultural School in San Ildefonso town; and Asia Tech Educational Foundation Inc. and PP Hubli National Agricultural School, both in San Miguel town.

Attendance in the forum was completed, according to some students who resented being forced to attend the activities. Rosette Dojon and Gerneda Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

ROUNDUP

Illegal recruiter jailed

CITY OF CALAUAN—Police in Mabitac, 28, a job recruiter, is now in jail after agents of the National Bureau of Investigation arrested her for illegal recruitment and estafa at a bad hostess on July 1. The NBI said Mabitac lied about the victims, her cousins, to deprive money in the amount of her two companions in Manila. While the victims were complaining to the recruiter, she again asked for other relatives' help from Manila. Six victims, led by Leonila Montemayor, who found that they would get back the P164,000 paid they paid last year for placement in jobs in Korea.

Marianne Hosta, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Suspected rebel captured

LUCENA CITY—Government forces captured a suspected New People's Army rebel and a member of a robbery gang in San Francisco, Quezon on Sunday morning, according to Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay, commander of the Armed Forces Southern Luzon Command (Solcom). He identified the arrested rebel as Jimmy Estanguia Jr., of Barangay Badiqui of the said town. Report said soldiers encountered the NPA rebels in the morning of July 10 in Malagonlong, Mauban municipal. A gunfight followed, after which the rebels retreated. Estanguia was later found in a hospital in San Francisco while recuperating from a bullet wound in his right shoulder. He was transferred to the Solcom hospital.

Julie Marie A., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Mindoro joins WOW exhibit

CITY OF CALAUAN—Mindoro will join Southern Tagalog in its exhibit during WOW Philippines! "The Best of The Philippines" in Milwaukee, Manila from July 21-31. The Occidental Mindoro Provincial Tourism Council and World "same business" chamber officials will go on to selected schools and establishments to invite them to the area. The province will showcase resorts and horse-based products like virgin coconut oil, herbal bath soaps and honey tree. A wrestling game competition, Mangyan dance and other native exhibitions designed by Mindoro Governor Rey Del Mundo will be rounded by Governor Mindoro Vice Gov. Ms. Cinta Teleza Rosales. Marianne Hosta, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Jail guard killed in ambush

CAMP PENTIST—Mt. Laguna—A jail guard was killed while a prisoner he was escorting was seriously wounded after gunmen waylaid them on their way back to the provincial jail from a case hearing in Talisay town on July 8. Killed was jail officer Marlon Aquino, a member of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Batangas City and wounded was Nicomedes Rosas, a detainee at the provincial jail who is facing murder charges. The victims were escorted convicts at the Talisay municipal trial court. Police said the two were about to board their service vehicle when the gunman suddenly approached them and shot at them. The suspect then fled about in a white Toyota Corolla car. Inquiries disclosed the said town a bullet wound in the chest while Rosas suffered a bullet wound in the thigh.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Complaint through text

CITY OF CALAMBA—The Public Assistance and Response Center of the City Public Safety Department has proposed a system where motorists, complaints, and files on Pasadena, this morning. Officer III, Called "Pabalam Ko. Text Ako," the proposal was inspired by the same proposal of the provincial government of Nueva Ecija, Pamahon noted. The two telecommunications giants,

Smart and Globe, will present their systems that will include calculations of cars' consumption to avoid excessive wear. Marianne Hosta, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Soldiers' honesty lauded

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Two landmark of the Philippine Marine Corps soldiers of the 58th Infantry Battalion engaged in Kabacsan after no fire and recovery payment of P20,000 when they encountered a check for the government troops' allowances on March 11. Maj. Alvara Eliel Bravo, spokesperson of the 4th Infantry Division, identified the soldiers as Pfc. Tirso Cipriano Jr., dishearing officer at 58th IB, and Cpl. Fredilino Opinion. "We commend the honest action of Major Rapanoon and Technical Sergeant Bacolor for not only one act but many more of our other unsung heroes," Sta Rodriguez, CMP manager in 2008 said in response to the 4th IB.

Grace Garcia-Alfonso, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Mak commander Alejandrino, 94

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Casto Alejandrino, vice commander of the anti-Japanese resistance group Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon (Hukbalahap), died on Tuesday in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. He was 94. His nephew, Carlos Magsaysay, said the cause had not been known. Rosario but last week before he died at about 4 p.m. on Tuesday. Magsaysay also served as chief of staff of the Hukbalahap Magsaysay ng Bayan and provincial governor of Pampanga during the reign of some of the leaders in that province. His death came two months after Hukbalahap chief, Luis Taruc, died. Under socialist rule, Alejandrino was elected mayor of Arayat, Pampanga, in 1946. He was representative of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas during peace talks with representatives of the administration of the late President Ferdinand Marcos in 1986.

Emelito Bugtas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Execs foil looting of sunken ship

OLONGAPO CITY—The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and the Philippine Coast Guard foiled another attempt to loot a sunken vessel at the Subic Bay here.

Felipe Macabalabad, PCG station commander here, said the loot, a ship's bow estimated to weigh a ton, was already on the shore of Barrio Barretto when personnel from the PCG in Subic town and the SBMA tourism department arrived there on Monday.

Macabalabad said the loot was taken from a Japanese vessel submerged in Subic Beach here.

He said they have identified five residents as suspects in the illegal salvage operation of a mariners treasure. They were Beryl Sardo, Rogelio Cabaco, Jose Marcia, Rosario Silvia and Willy David, *the alleged financier.*

On Wednesday, Macabalabad said the PCG and the suspects reached an agreement for the voluntary return of the loot.

It was the second reported looting of sunken vessels in two months.

On June 13, a dive instructor at the Subic freeport said a sunken American vessel, which has become one of the popular diving sites in Subic, was looted.

Oliver Barth Hornido said while he and some tourists were on conventional dive last month, he noticed that some of the USS New York's pipes, rubber and parts holes were missing.

The looting prompted Kenneth Peralta, SBMA tourism department head, to call for a resolution meeting on Tuesday among Subic Bay investors, dive shop owners and police officials.

During the meeting, dive shop owners assailed personnel of the PCG and the SBMA harbor patrol for their reported inability to check on the rampant looting of sunken vessels, but vowed and dynamite fishing in Subic Bay as well.

Peralta said the SBMA law enforcement and tourism department men, together with some investors, conducted a surprise monitoring of areas in Subic Bay in May this year and discovered that at least 10 unregistered boats were conducting illegal fishing.

"They seem to be operating with impunity," a dive shop owner who was with the meeting's main said during the meeting.

"We have uniformed law enforcement personnel with us, we purposely drew a Coast Guard flag when we approached the area, but no one among those illegal fishermen seemed to mind us," he said.

Subic dive shop owners also said that only 27 of the 30 sunken vessels are still in Subic.

Avelino Amagelo, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Gunman attacks detachment, kills 3

CUYAPO CITY—Three persons, two of them soldiers, were killed when a lone gunman attacked an Army detachment in Nueva Ecija, Sultan Sunday afternoon.

Two soldiers died when a motorcycle-riding man fired at the detachment of the Task Force Tabakalong, an anti-kidnapping unit of the Army's Sixth Infantry Division, at around 3:30 p.m. yesterday.

Staff Sgt. Agustino Tenorio, 6th ID chief said the suspect, dressed in fatigues, used M-14 rifle in their attack on the detachment, killing two soldiers.

"The soldiers returned fire and he (suspect) was also killed," he said.

Sgt Rubido, Mom Marie (Brooke: Four kidnappers, and the first reporting) resident from their detachment revealed that the suspect was a member of the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang.

The Pentagon, blamed for at least 30 kidnapping cases in Mindanao, first gained notoriety on Oct. 17, 2001, when it abducted Italian priest Giuseppe Pierantozzi while he was saying Mass in Dimasalang, Cantilangga del Sur. But Rubido added that they also received another report that the suspect was "a militiaman based in nearby Bukani town in Maguindanao."

Col. Jerry Jalandoni, commanding officer of the 601st Army Brigade said the still unidentified suspect was indeed from Bukani town. Jonglhyn Medrano and Aquilito Bonita, PDI Mindanao Bureau

LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES

"MANIFESTO OF ADHERENCE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, THE RULE OF LAW AND EXPRESSING OUR UNEQUIVOCAL SUPPORT TO THE LEGITIMACY OF THE PRESIDENCY OF GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO"

We, the members of the League of the Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP), the association of 1,301 municipalities nationwide duly constituted by virtue of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local government Code of 1991 and is mandated to "maintain, articulate and crystallize issues affecting municipal government administration and finding, through proper and legal means, solutions thereto, "categorically state:

1. That President Gloria Macapagal - Arroyo is the duly elected President of the Republic of Philippines by virtue of the provisions of our Constitution and of our laws and was proclaimed by the very institutions established by the fundamental law of the land.
2. That we, as the duly elected chief executives of our respective localities and as presidents of our respective LMP Provincial Chapters believe that it is incumbent upon us to show the practice of democracy in our country.
3. That, as local chief executives, we are the frontliners in public service and as such we have positions to feel the real sentiments and thoughts of our respective constituents.
4. That, during the past few days, several events have unfolded causing undue harm to the entire nation and we believe, as local chief executives that the political crisis could be resolved through the observance of and adherence to the Constitutional processes and that we strongly discourage any and all legal and unconstitutional means to address these political conflicts.

Now therefore, we the members of the National Directorate representing the League of Municipalities of the Philippines urge all Filipinos to continue with their daily lives and allow our Constitution to take its natural course in resolving this crisis.

Done this 30th day of July 2005 at the Legaspi Shangri-La Hotel, Pasay City during the Special National Directorate Meeting

Variations on a theme: Proponents / opponents

WHO'S WHO

1. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
2. Michael Defensor
3. Miriam Defensor-Santiago
4. Fidel Ramos
5. Mike Villarin
6. Reynaldo Wycoco
7. Ronald Dee
8. Lito Monico
9. Teresa Oplenella
10. Jose de Venecia
11. Raul Gonzalez
12. Mike Arroyo
13. Mikey Arroyo
14. Imelda Marcos
15. Arturo Lorenzo
16. Late "Chavit" Singson
17. Edward Kapunan
18. Virgilio Garcillanos
19. Corazon Aquino
20. Raul Roco
21. Franklin Drilon
22. Dinky Soliman
23. Cesar Purisima
24. Samuel Dig
25. Bro. Armin Luistro
26. Teddy Casiño
27. Etta Rosales
28. Bro. Eddie Villanueva
29. Francis Escudero
30. Jejomar Binay
31. Joseph Estrada
32. Imee Marcos
33. Ricardo Romulo
34. Ramon "Boy" Cruz
35. Rodo Belo
36. Cesar Flores
37. Panfilo Lacson
38. Fr. Robert Reyes
39. Bishop Fernando Capalla
40. Vice President Noli de Castro
41. Efren Mut
42. Loren Legarda
43. Joseph Marcelenet
44. Aquilino Pimentel
45. Eduardo Ermita

Support GMA

Nine Luzon, Visayas Luzon, House of Representatives Minority Bloc Friends Education

La GMA secure

Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, Catholic Educators Association of the Philippines, Association of Religious Educators, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Philippine Council for Evangelical Churches, Filipino Law Alumni Foundation, Jesus and Paul Ecumenical

More resignations, but up from commissioned

Sabio Manuel, Assumption College, Universidad de Dios, Tomas Pinpin Sr. Peace, and Development (TUPAD)

Support GMA, charter change is still in parliamentary system and term shortens by 2008

Fidel Ramos and Jose de Venecia

We're also constitutional issues

Couples for Christ, Members of Rotary Business Club, Manila Overseas Press Club, Association of Executives Assistants of the Philippines

We protest impeachment

Alliance of Artists

Support GMA/No to Resignation

Lakas-CMD, Nacionalista Party, Liberal Party, Alliance Mar Roxas Group, Philippine National Police, Mayor League of Provinces, League of Municipalities of the Philippines, City & Town Mayors Philippines, NCR, Manila, Puerto Princesa, Davao City, Metropolitan governors, city and town mayors, Nation's Rizal Movement, Ilocanos Region, Kalanggaya of Cagayan, Kalagadan Lost, Iloga Ilocos and Filipino Communities Abroad (OFW) Leaders in Riyadh, Federation of Filipino Communities in Kuwait, Filipino Community in Bahrain, Iloga Filipino sa Singapore, Filipino Community Social Club Oman, Philippine Business Association of Ras Alkhaimah and United Filipino Community in Kuwait), Filipino Muslim Organizations, Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Federation of the Philippine Foundations Inc., the St. Pascal Baylon Dalandan, of Lucao, Manila Associate Around the Philippines and other Muslim organizations

Support elected president

Ex Chavitist: Mike Velarde

Neutral

Armed Forces of the Philippines

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Thursday, July 14, 2005

THE DREAM BEGINS JULY 17! The much-talked about reality show "Hollywood Dream" will finally begin! Find out who will get a chance to fly to New York and Los Angeles, meet Hollywood producers and casting directors, get a Screen Actors Guild card, appear on "As the World Turns" and land a role in 2 movies being produced in Hollywood.

SUNDAY 9:00 PM

ABC

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

40,000 cry out: GMA, resign

Front page A1

HANGING on to Nissy Baaire for a better view of the day's discontents played and displayed on stage. MARY LOMBO

thereof whenever personalities were jabbed to record the saga.

"We want a resignation, we want changes, we want reforms now," Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay said separately.

Nicolas Fernandez of the militant Bayan Muna party said the protest was "a preview for a big get movie. Its end "the situation is not yet ripe for a full-blown people power."

"We will not stop marching until the steps down," said Lacson, who had previously stayed away from opposition rallies.

"The most sane think of the issue is impeachment," he added.

The opposition dismissed said the policemen agreed not to spoil during the rally, saying the event was "a rally for the people."

Bigger rally on July 25

Blondy plans are being drawn for a larger rally on July 25 when the President makes her annual State of the Nation Address at the opening of Congress, traditionally the busiest for transfer protests.

Lacson said the group estimated the crowd in Makati at around 40,000—the same figure used by the dramatized Press. Police put it at between 35,000 and 40,000. Opposition sources said the organizers numbered more than 50,000.

Still, it was nowhere near the mammoth rallies that preceded the ouster of President Joseph Estrada in 2000 and Joseph Estrada in 2001.

Some priests helped swell the Makati crowd by urging their flock to join the protest. One of them, Fr. Raul Bautista, called on Mangaoang at the Silas Shrine to go to Makati to to the People Power Monument on Edsa, where another priest, Fr. Robert Reyes, was holding a hunger strike.

"We're over the brink of evil now. We have to do something," Bautista said.

Left-wing groups and supporters of Estrada, who has volunteered to serve as a transitional leader after the defeat in a world, were transporting protesters by bus and jeeps from the provinces, police said. Organizers complained that protesters were being stopped before entering the capital.

Stopped, arrested

Around 40 members of an urban poor group were arrested with their leader while on their way to the rally. Police hailed Jaime del Prado, leader of the Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya (KPD), and his companions in the Bonanza area around 11:15 a.m.

Chief Supt. Nestor Mata stopped five of their jeepneys and arrested the KPD members, most of whom hailed from the Bicutan and Manila area in Pasay, Manila. Police said they were arrested in connection with the unauthorized anti-terrorism campaign.

In the south, police briefly blocked a 5-truckload 600 mail, taxis travelling from Laguna and Quezon toward Makati. Police said they were acting on a tip received after receiving information that communist rebels planned to infiltrate the Makati rally.

Passenger jeeps carrying 500 protesters from Cavite and Batangas were also held up at Nichols Gate through a police checkpoint in Bacoor, Cavite. In Bacoor, Cavite, San Pedro, some 1,78 protesters from different provinces in Rizal were also stopped by the police.

About 4,000 police, backed by 1,000 soldiers, were deployed to the capital against possible attacks by al-Qaeda-linked militants from the Abu Sayyaf group and Jemaah Islamiyah (active network, Mc) to Manila police chief Director Te Bacolod said.

Coup rumors swirled as the eve of the rally Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday confirmed some reports of a new plot and statements of support on among middle-level officers.

A retired military officer who has been implicated in past coup attempts said that disgruntled soldiers were organizing groups and may take action against Mr Arroyo, while an Army captain, discussing the motivation for action, said the military must intervene when the government becomes ineffective.

'Theatres'

Raphaeno Tuliao, chief of the Presidential Management Staff, said the protest did not worry Mr Arroyo. Calling it a parcel of opposition "theatrical," Tuliao said it was held in Makati to show the financial system was in a shambles.

"She won't just simply resign because of demonstrations in the streets, even if there are grassroots figures asking her to resign," Tuliao said.

The 54-year-old President has apologized for talking to Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano in a telephone conversation that was tapped before she was installed as president. She has denied manipulating the vote.

Mr Arroyo has defied calls for her to resign, despite the resignation of seven of her Cabinet secretaries, the unexpected breakaway of her allies in Congress and Senate, in the business community and the academe and pleas by ex-President Corazon Aquino. *[See story on Page A2.]*

New lease on life

Leandro Mendoza, Aquino's spokesperson, said the former President did not attend yesterday's protest, pointing out that she did not wish to see another People Power revolt.

A decision on Saturday by the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines not to interfere in politics, announced by police and military officials they will remain neutral and a declaration of unwavering support by former President Fidel Ramos gave Mr Arroyo a lease on life, according to analysts.

'Hello, Garci'

The crowds began converging at noon on Ayala Avenue, where a sound system on a stage played the "Hello Garci." Then a satirical theme song, "May Bagong Umaga," and sound bites from his wiretap declaring "a lie is the beauty of a thief." Bayan has accused Mr Arroyo of stealing the election "not once but twice."

"Hello Garci" ring tones were broadcast from the stage, as well as a portion of the wiretap where the President was allegedly asking Garcillano if she could muster 1 million votes to win the election.

The status of assassinated opposition leader Benigno Aquino Jr was addressed with signs declaring "Benigno oh," "Gloria bumaba ka na, sila dyan," and "Be not afraid."

GMA's cues to the defense

As the protesters were gathering, House Speaker Jose de Venecia spoke on ABS-CBN television, interrupting a session of the parliamentary style of government and saying he had no ambition of becoming prime minister.

De Venecia and Ramon Bagatsing cited their proposals to amend the presidential-style Constitution and provide Mr Arroyo a graceful way out of the current political turmoil.

Tuliao was asked about the latest independent survey showing 72 percent of people in Metro Manila did not trust Mr Arroyo. He said this was what happened when there was a well-funded and well-organized campaign against the President.

"My only question is: what happens if next month, or two months from now, the Pres's done's more no-nos go up again," he says are surveys. It's the number of the people that is changes. You cannot determine the future of the presidency by any pulse," he said.

Revolution by media

Asked about observation that Filipinos tend to be influenced hysterically by surveys, Tuliao said: "I am not sure if it is the accuracy or the media. Maybe [there] become a very powerful tool in this day and age. Some political analysts are saying that if ever there would be a revolution at this time, it would be a revolution by media."

"What is an snake-zone to not see is the presidency ... but the survival of our institutions," he said.

A Union Bank employee, who did not wish to be identified, said his company closed its offices and its employees were told to go home, indicating it wanted its employees to attend the rally.

He said he was in favor of Mr Arroyo resigning. "How can I explain to my children that you can lie and cheat and steal and still you only have to apologize?"

Another rallyist, saw veteran Ginez Cruzito, 79, said: "Gloria is OK but it's the people around her who are corrupt." With reporters Norman Bordadora, Jhaniel Labog-Javellana, Cynthia P. Balloon, Margarita C. Ortiz, Marlon Ramos, Job R. Bebas, Juan Escandor Jr., Gil Francis E. Arcinas, Delfin T. Mallari Jr. and Emir Etcuban Gumba, PDI interhaven Lizano Diaz

PNP, military top brass rally round GMA

By Luige B. del Puerto

TOP MILITARY and police officials closed ranks yesterday behind President Arroyo and Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and declared their full support for her as the embattled administration would withstand the storm.

Police Director General Arturo Lomibao, National Capital Region Police Office chief Director Nestor Mata, and security top police officials.

Joining them were Rear Adm. Tirso Danga, AFP deputy chief of staff for intelligence Lt. Gen. Alexander Bernard Yano, chief of the AFP National Capital Region Command; Brig. Gen. Rhoden Quevedo, chief of the Intelligence Service, chief of the Armed Forces; and, Brig. Gen. Eugenio Cachuela, assistant chief for operations.

Coordinated efforts

The meeting underscored the seriousness of the situation. Police and military officials have not been officially to discuss the demonstrations since they started last month.

"We are here to coordinate our efforts at securing and ensuring peace and order in the country," Reyes said, adding that the PNP and AFP have a "thorough plan" should there's no cope with the situation.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's order to the police and military was to allow the people to express themselves but, at the same time, to ensure the public safety's right to live in peace," said Reyes, one of Arroyo's closest allies.

Police earlier warned that the Abu Sayyaf and the New People's Army could exploit the Makati rally but protesters dismissed the warning as a "scare tactic."

Keep calm

"To the general public, we say keep calm," Reyes said. "The government will see to it that normalcy and security and chaos will not happen. That is the guidance of the President and that's what we are going to do."

Lomibao also warned that militants caught in police or military operations during the rally beyond charges of instigation of an illegal assembly. There were reports that such people would be joining the Makati crowd to make it appear that the police and military were using excessive force to quell the protest.

"We are going through a difficult period in our history, and we just ask our people to remain calm and remain united. We will get over this," Reyes said.

He will discuss the role of law because the rule of law is when is necessary. We have to see it if that anarchy and virtual and chaos will not happen—that is the most important thing. We don't want those groups and groups with vested interests to exploit the situation," he said.

Erap bucks graceful exit for GMA

By Norman Bordadora

FORMER President Joseph Estrada does not want President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign gracefully and that he was not consulted when he was forced out of Malacañang in January 2001.

Estrada was reacting to the proposal of former President Fidel Ramos to allow Ms Arroyo to step out as President and the Constitution is changed to give her only a shift to a parliamentary form of government.

Under the Ramos proposal, elections will be held in May 2006 to choose the country's next leaders.

"Nothing from the president, tal to the parliamentary system is not the answer," Estrada said.

"It is hastily a scrappy measure to ensure that Ms Arroyo is not subjected to the humiliation which she herself caused upon me," the ousted President said in response to questions from the business through his Erap.org Blues.

"The issue is, there was never any question of my resignation from the Filipino people. In fact, Mrs Ramos herself said that no noble objective other than to prolong Mrs Arroyo's stay in Malacañang. I am completely against it," he said.

Estrada said the country had been plunged into a political crisis because the administration committed fraud in the elections last year.

"It is not the system of government that is the problem. It is the person who sits in Malacañang. If the elected people had been upheld especially by those who were in positions of power, then there would be no crisis," Estrada said.

A touch of show biz at business district

Front page B1

in their shirt-right, white and blue outfits. They grinded on a makeshift stage, working the country's financial center with a hot number.

Eleven also weekened performers in the TV show host and comedian Vice Ganda—fourteen others the rank the stage to sing "Sang Lahi," a patriotic song.

Night for Susan

But the night seemed to belong to the members of Susan Roces.

The rally seemed to turn into a mini-cinema when cardboard in the window of his opposition presidential candidacy and movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. appeared.

Men and women shrieked when the emerged from the car, dressed in a white blouse.

Only about 50 feet separated Susan from the stage but it took her something like 20 minutes to make it to the stage. Reconnaissance marched around her.

Marshalls led by actor Rhen Reyes Jr. parted the panting, shoving crowd to clear a path for her.

Flag causes commotion

Cries of "Susan, Susan" broke from the crowd.

The tension among the demonstrators had other reasons to squeal—actress Richard Gomez and Rudy Fernandez also came to add glamour to the crowd.

The appearances of opposition lion Pandita "Ping" Lacson also

This dog went to Ayala

EVERY day dog seemed to have made a stand.

Monday, a 5-year-old black mongrel, was among those outside of Filipinos who flocked to Ayala Avenue in Makati protesting to demand President Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation.

The dog from Mandaluyong, Imasi, was brought to the rally by owner Albert Bautista so it like Ilocano to be there for democracy and Justice.

The pair was spotted by the heavens walking along Paseo de Roxas. They had been trailing around Makati since 8:30 a.m., or six hours before the second rally began.

Hanging from Wonder's mouth was a sign in Filipino which read: "Tuloy pa rin." Translated, it means: "We are the people. People power."

"He has been to a lot of rallies," Bautista said. He added that Wonder attended its first rally during the "Edsa Uno" revolution in 2000. He called Wonder the "Dog of the Barrio."

Bautista said that next time, he would bring his pet pig. Arcelen B. Ui

Continued from Page A1

congressman and Mayor JV Ejercito, son of former President Joseph Estrada.

For some, money was the driving force in attendance.

Sen. Antonio V. Gonzo, an oil industrialist supporter, said the Makati rallier was so far "the best rally money can buy" 14, and P700 was being offered in Bicutan alone. In Quezon Boul, up to P1,000 was dangled.

Gen. Armed Golam Ambisang, president of the National Muslim Peace and Order Council, said his members were paid P500 each to go to Makati.

"Most of them had no jobs and just wanted the money to put food on the table," he said.

Nationally business thrives where people thrive. Apparently not in Makati yesterday.

Street hawkers from neighboring cities ranked the whole city as one of the country's business centers to ply their trade.

Not buying

"Business wasn't good," estimated peanut vendor Aniel Bas, from Pasay City said after hopping the rally.

She lost only cents to sell peanuts but also to join the chanting for the President's resignation.

"The trouble is people are so fixed up these days that not too many of them are buying," said Nida Rivera, a cigarette vendor from Bulacan.

Vendor Primo Dobilo had the same glum experience. She too made many cents to buy his ice cream.

Aliseel Dilgalan, 25, walked all the way from Pasay to sell her corn jelly, but "the rallyists had brought with them their own food."

But business boomed at least for one afternoon for bottled water vendor Jamie Perez, from Pasig. Normally selling 100 a day, Perez said he expected to take home more than P500.

Picnic

A strip in the business district became a picnic ground for rallyists, who came with their "boxes." Some of them sprawled on the sidewalk and ate their food: pack of fish, boiled egg and rice.

Elsewhere, it was business as usual.

"There was no difference at all. The number of our customers remained the same," the manager of a famous Makati fast-food chain said, requesting anonymity.

She also said many people stopped to her store for another reason. They wanted to use the toilet.

Among Makati workers, tension was minimal.

A few employees, who declined to give their names, told the Inquirer that the rally was really a bustle. "We have to walk because vehicles are not allowed in the area."

Why Makati?

Both public and private schools were turned from playing Makati throughout yesterday.

Ateneo de Manila University, Miriam College, Assumption College, Philippine Women's University, Centro Escolar University, Mapua Institute of Technology, Far Eastern University, Lyceum of the Philippines, Colegio de San Juan de Letran, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, Arellano University, Jose Rizal University, Pateros Technological College, Philippine Christian University, Manuel L. Quezon University, Technological University of the Philippines, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Adamson University, Emilio Aguinaldo College, Manila Central University, Manila Tytana College, Manila Adventist College, Manila Christian College, Manila Doctors College, Manila Luzon Colleges, Manila Southwestern University, Manila Technical Institute

GLIMPSES, ELLIPSES, LAPSES

IRRESISTIBLE FORCE. The most-awaited, most-admired personality at the Makati rally, Susan Roces, and suddenly the demonstrators unabashedly display their reverence of their affection toward the widow of FPJ. [illegible]

IN YOUR FACE. protest (left) with a GMA mask (right) complete with the presidential smile. [illegible]

KEEP OUT—ostensibly the message to the "bad elements" who might try to infiltrate the Makati opposition rally, are the PNP Southern Tagalog regional director who orders checkpoints set up to "strategic points" like the entry to the South Superhighway in Calamba. [illegible]

DECLARING THE PASIG. Members of the Presidential Security Group patrol the Pasig River while the pro-booster of Malacañang [illegible]

IT'S A FIRST for Sen. Ping Lacson to join a protest rally but he did not address the crowd as politicians were not allowed to. [illegible]

THE MEDIUM is the message. Witness in the throw pillow of the Nido-Gen't type, Alex Pagsia, is not just a face in the crowd. [illegible]

FULL ALERT. The military and the police are ready to go to battle amid warnings of terror attacks and a swirl of coup rumors, as usual. Soldiers at Camp Aguinaldo stand by as protesters start massing in Makati. [illegible]

FIRE is better directed at the angry throngs, the size of which is being vigorously exaggerated by the media in a blatant act of President Arroyo's foes. [illegible]

IMMOVABLE FORCE. President Arroyo gets the applause and applause of the Cagayan Local Government Executives, only the latest batch to come to the aid of the embattled President. While encouraging for so long rough. [illegible]

Brothers ambushed in Valenzuela; 1 dead

PEOPLE OF THE TRACKS
Residents of a shanty town stand perilously close to a speeding train in Manila.

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A HOUSEWOMAN was killed while her brother was wounded in an ambush in Valenzuela City Tuesday night.

Police identified the victims as Herminio Li Chua, 36, and his older brother Alan Suntay, 44, of Lo Grimaldo Mansion, Salitran Pueblo Street, Sta. Cruz, Manila.

City police chief Supt. Billy Beltran said the brothers were on their way home from their factory, Century Glass Inc., at about 8:30 p.m. when four unidentified men blocked their car outside the gate of the Cabral Industrial Park in Barangay Lingunan, Valenzuela.

The suspects immediately fired an .45 cal. hitting the brothers in different parts of the body, police said.

The younger Chua, who was driving the car, lost control of the wheel. The vehicle then hit a lamp post.

The brothers were brought to the MCU Medical Center Hospital where Herminio was declared dead on arrival.

Alan Suntay, on the other hand, is now in a stable condition and was moved to another hospital.

"We can't say if the incident was a result of a labor dispute or a case of attempted kidnapping," said Beltran, in response to questions from reporters as to the possible motive behind the shooting.

Recovered from the scene of the crime were 14 used shells of a caliber .45 and two deformed slugs of unknown caliber.

Artist's sketch

According to the police official, the family of the victims have requested that investigators talk to those after Herminio's funeral.

Beltran added that an artist's sketch of the gunmen based on descriptions provided by several witnesses would be released soon.

Gun in bar slay still a puzzler

By Margaux C. Deriz

THE DISPATCHIEF of Justice (DOJ) has required the Makati police to submit a recalibration from their Firearms and Explosives Division regarding the ownership of the gun used in shooting to death television director Louis Gonzaga in an upscale Makati bar last month.

The DOJ also requested the police to provide an up-to-date ballistics report related to the crime, according to National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) special investigator Allwin Guevara.

At the same time, the DOJ ordered the NBI to conduct a further investigation on the personalities involved in the incident, he added.

Guevara said the lawyer of Marites Diaz, Robert Velasco, arrived with a gun allegedly used in the shooting incident, told the NBI that they could prove his client was in Mindanao when the shooting took place.

The NBI agents, however, said that confirmed gunman Elmer Jamaica refused to surrender the firearm used in the shooting.

"His lawyer said there is a proper time and forum for that," Guevara said.

Other witnesses

Guevara added that they are looking at other witnesses, apart from Jamaica's friend Charito Angeles, who could provide more information regarding the crime.

Jamaica had revealed that Angeles handed him the gun during a fiesta at the house of the Sisworo TV host in Makati.

Apart from Santiago, six others were wounded in the June 8 incident.

See-through VIP rooms for Marikina

PRIVATE rooms in Marikina City night spots will no longer be that private with the enactment of a new ordinance.

The private rooms, also called VIP rooms, are rented out to customers who want a place separate from the main hall and the other customers.

The ordinance requires night spots to use transparent glass walls for the rooms. Doors , too, should have no locks. Customers who want to avail of these exclusive rooms will also have to register their names.

The ordinance was in response to reports that such rooms were being used for prostitution. Edson C. Sendoc

Binay political arch foe revives plunder cases

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

JUST as Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay was busy in the big anti-Arroyo rally in his city, a small anti-graft group yesterday revived the plunder cases it had filed against him and his wife.

"Politicians mired in corruption cases do not have the moral right to complain, much less slam for the removal of President Macapagal-Arroyo," group convenor Rufino Hilario said.

As president of the United Opposition, Binay has joined calls for Mrs. Arroyo's resignation.

Using a Commission on Audit report, Hilario's Campaign for Public Accountability filed plunder cases against Binay and his wife in 2003.

The group accused the couple of involvement in alleged anomalous transactions costing the city P622 million. Among the supposed anomalies are the buying of overpriced equipment for the Osmeña ng Makati and Fortaleza by City Hall.

Two days ago, the group filed an urgent motion to the Office of the Ombudsman to finally resolve its complaints.

"This is the most opportune time to bring this up because people are clamoring for changes. The change in leadership should be for the better, not for the worse," Hilario said.

A traitor is a traitor is a traitor

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

OH, DIMZ, how could you?

You were a spoiled brat in President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration because she gave you everything you wanted, and yet now you tell people your former boss is a no-good leader.

After breaking the heart of your former boss by resigning and calling for her resignation, you now tell the public you will protect the "dark secrets" of the administration that you once served.

Oh, Dimby, how could you do that?

Upon your request, the President placed the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) at your disposal at the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

In short, the enormous funds at the PCSO were at your disposal. Ha Presidente before GMA did that to the DSWD.

Ms. Arroyo was very accommodating to you, too accommodating to a fault.

When she planned to replace you with newly-elected Vice President Noli de Castro, you threw a temper tantrum and aired a river of tears.

GMA had to get back the position she offered to De Castro and embarrassed herself doing that in order to please you and your colleagues in the united opposition. I say "united" because most of you are spoiled brats.

The unkindest cut of all was that day before you joined your people in calling for EDSA to erupt, you were in Malacañang with fellow Cabinet members surrounding the President with the song, "Let's hold on together."

And yet, while singing that song of unity, you were already planning to stab your boss in the back.

"Ni sa Brute Tibs, tou, Brutus?" were Julius Caesar's last words. You were like Brutus, Dimby.

If you think the President committed a grave sin by talking to Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, you would just have outgrossed-and-did up.

People would have admired you had you just kept quiet.

So, let's grant (but without admitting) the President erred in talking to the villain, must you join the mob in stoning the hand that once fed you, Dimky Scrimsan?

Some people laugh at Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez for supposedly kowtowing to GMA in this hour of crisis.

But that's what is expected of a subordinate—almost by his or her boss when the going gets rough.

Which would you rather have for a subordinate, a Dinky or a Raul?

In the early days of the Cory Aquino presidency, military officers who stood by deposed President Marcos up to the last hour were harassed in mid by the rioters who stormed his palaces.

One such harassed and oppressed officer was Col. Arturo Tucom (Philippine Military Academy Class 1970) who was a member of Marcos' Presidential Security Command (PSC).

Tucom told me more than the Aquino administration didn't know how to appreciate loyalty, from if he and his fellow Marcos boys were on the other side, Tucom said, they should be admired because they stood by their boss to the very end.

"Look, Mac, those guys who betrayed their commander-in-chief deserve might more betray the present commander-in-chief (Cory Aquino)," Tucom said.

Tucom's words were prophetic. Several there six coup attempts against President Cory led by the military officers who betrayed Marcos!

So, Dinky who can trust you now and your fellow conspirators after what you did to your former boss?

If you could visit GMA in the hall, there's a big possibility you would do the same thing to your former boss.

A traitor is a traitor is a traitor.

Dont miss the ultimate one-stop destination for all your corporate needs!

Corporate World 2005 incorporating

CORPORATE GIVEAWAYS 2005

&

CORPORATE SOLUTIONS 2005

July 14-16, 2005 | World Trade Center Metro Manila
Exhibit Hours: 10:00am - 7:00pm

FEATURING...

ADMISSION IS FREE!

A project of WORLDEXCO in cooperation with Infocom

The most interesting people and personalities leave their mark in the pages of the Sunday Inquirer Magazine

INQUIRER

METRO
Edited by Omar C. Dimagiba

EZ2 28 14 | SUERTRES 6 6 2 (2d draw) | FOUR DIGIT 6 7 9 4

MEGALOTTO 6/45 2 13 22 32 38 45 P23,534,145.60

Text or your feedback:

Beauty doctors of the stars face BIR raps

HAPPY and Pio Calayan. Their lawyer says the beauty specialists had already complied with the BIR request.

But Calayan lawyer denies any wrongdoing

By DJ Yap

THE TAX man's month for beauty experts Bhenard and Pamela "Pia" Calayan.

The husband-and-wife team of cosmetic doctors was charged with defying a subpoena requiring them to submit their accounting books to the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

But their lawyer said the Calayans, who are known for their work with movie and television personalities, already fulfilled their tax dues and had submitted all the documents asked of them.

The BIR filed yesterday a complaint against the couple in the Quezon City prosecutor for violations of Section 266 of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997.

Four dates

According to the complaint, the tax agency requested the Calayans to present their books on Feb. 17, March 1, March 7 and April 6, but they failed to do so.

This prompted the agency to issue a subpoena duces tecum dated May 10, which set the deadline for compliance on June 14, said BIR investigators Mario Cruz and Jose Comsing in their joint affidavit.

On June 20, the summons was received by Dr. Calayan, who held clinic at the Calayan Surgicenter at Medical Plaza in Makati City.

The Calayans requested an extension of the deadline to the 17th Bureau chief Lorenzo Roberto Rodriguez, but the BIR lawyers said the couple never appeared to present the requested documents.

Reached by the Inquirer, Calayan counsel Bhimal Pascual-Lopez, however, said his clients presented official receipts and documents on March 7, April 21, April 28 and May 27. She said the documents were stamped "received" by the BIR during an in-house audit by the tax agency.

Nothing more to submit

Lopez maintained that on June 17, the Calayans had already complied with the subpoena and that there was no more basis for a subpoena.

Subscribers-only commerce is punishable by up to two years imprisonment and a fine of up to P10,000.

The Calayans, from a segment on GMA 7's morning show "Unang Hirit" called "Get to Know Celebrities" with Pedro Serrano.

Their viral, beauty doctor Vicki Belo, also hosts a beauty segment on ABS-CBN's "Magandang Umaga Bayan."

It was Manuel's liposuction procedure on iconic TV talk show host Boy Abunda that catapulted him and his dermatologist wife Pia to celebrity fame.

The Calayans have been endorsed by popular show biz celebrities like Angel Locsin, Pia Guanio, Sunshine Cruz, Ethel Booba and Ara Mina and Mina Mariano. With Marinel R. Cruz

KIA "Power to Surprise"
KARNIVAL | SORENTO 4x4 | picanto | SEDONA | PREGIO GS
"CAR OF THE YEAR 2004" | ELIMINATES GAS PAINS! | "THE AFFORDABLE MINIVAN" | "SUPER DELUXE FAMILY VAN" "16 Valve Diesel Engine"
KIA MANDALUYONG | KIA MAKATI | KIA LAS PIÑAS

THURSDAY, JULY 14, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B1

BUSINESS

Crisis divides influential business group

Prominent families decry lack of consultation

By Ronnel W. Domingo

DIVISIONS among local business groups seem to be growing as protest actions demanding that President Macapagal-Arroyo resign picked up in the country's main business district.

Prominent among local business leaders, especially those from the Makati Business Club, seem to favor some kind of exit for GMA, members accord the group's chairman and board of trustees for not consulting them about a statement issued on July 4.

Last Friday, MBC chair Ricardo Romulo read a statement titled "A Time to Change" which said the group had come to the conclusion that the President's ability to effectively manage the affairs of state "had been severely impaired."

The statement, which also bore the name of the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines, asked the President to resign "for the sake of national unity and for the sake of moving forward."

In a telephone interview, MBC member Fernando Martinez said the MBC leaders came up with the statement without due process.

Martinez is one of the 36 members providing the endorsement. The others included the chairman, the directors, the Ayalas, the Romualdezes and other members of prominent business families.

Madinabeitia, who is chair of Business Development Corp., said the MBC seems to

RIOT police walk past the Philippine Stock Exchange building in Makati financial district on Wednesday. Moody's Investors Service said on Wednesday it had put its seven-year outlook on the Philippines' investment rating under review to cut the country's budget deficit had been derailed due to months by a political crisis.

POLITICAL MESS

Firms brace for lower profits

PHILIPPINE companies—facing a weaker peso, rising outlook rates and higher interest rates—are likely to suffer weaker profits this year if the country's political crisis is not resolved quickly, analysts said.

But the damage will be cushioned by slowly falling debt levels and foreign currency holdings set up prior to President Macapagal-Arroyo's barrage of woes that sent the beleaguered domestic economy into a tailspin.

"If it drags on for the rest of the year, then obviously it's going to hurt," said Edgar Amorsolo, research head at BPI Forties Securities.

Moody's Investors Service, which put a negative outlook on the Philippines' debt-rating on Wednesday, said the country's budget deficit had been derailed due to months by a political crisis.

Moody's said the country's budget deficit had been derailed due to months by a political crisis.

Fedex moving hub to China

HONG Kong's new Bayun airport in southern China, will open in December 2006 and replace Fedex's current regional base at the Subic Bay freeport—a move that reflects China's emergence as a trade powerhouse.

The new facility will be Fedex's largest outside the United States, measuring 12,000 square meters, and will allow Fedex to handle 20,000 packages an hour—double the Subic Bay's capacity.

Capacity can be doubled to 40,000 packages an hour. Reuters

WHAT'S INSIDE

3 ATM networks link up

3 ATM networks link up

By Dorli C. Dumlao

TIP TEXT years after electronic banking was introduced in the Philippines, the three local automated teller machine (ATM) networks have finally interconnected, but is there may danger as claimed by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas is still nowhere in sight.

Bancnet and Expressnet yesterday signed a memorandum of agreement for interconnection. As Megalink is already linked to the third network Megalink, this means that bank clients can now use the ATMs of any of the three networks.

Top officials of Bancnet and Expressnet, however, ruled out the possibility of a three-way merger anytime soon.

Bank of the Philippine Islands president and chair of Expressnet Aurelio Montinola (yesterday said his network had explored the possibility of a merger with other ATM networks but decided that interconnection was the most suitable at present.

"If there's any advantage in a merger, it would be in the form of additional customers at lower cost. By being interconnected we already have the additional customers," Montinola said.

He said the country's more than 16.4 million ATM cardholders now have access to 6,000 ATMs nationwide.

Bancnet chair Angelito Villanueva, also senior executive vice president of Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., said interconnection in lieu of a merger would create "healthy competition and cooperation instead of a destructive one between networks."

At noon (this Bancnet, for its part, had evolved from a mere ATM network to a multi-channel banking service provider, facilitating other services like POS (point-of-sales) e-billing, Internet and mobile phone banking.

"This interconnection is an event that will mark another stride in electronic banking and commerce," he said.

Expressnet includes the BPI, BPI Family Bank, PSBC and UBP. Megalink, Land Bank of the Philippines and Banco De Oro Universal Bank.

Bancnet covers 26 banks, including Allied Banking Corp., China Banking Corp., Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Security Banking Corp., Asia United Bank, Banco Filipino, Oriental Commercial Bank, Citibank, Export and Industry Bank, Manila Bank, Land Bank of the Philippines and Banco De Oro Universal Bank.

Bancnet covers 26 banks, including Allied Banking Corp., China Banking Corp., Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Security Banking Corp., Asia United Bank, Banco Filipino, Oriental Commercial Bank, Citibank, Export and Industry Bank, Manila Bank, Land Bank of the Philippines and Banco De Oro Universal Bank.

Family that preys together

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Bernal III

[illegible] as a consensus who is a regular paying member of the SEC. I strongly believe in rare things.

One, presidential terms are not very long or else ... and, rare, that "e.t." can also be an organic explosive.

Actually, from what I learned from economist Epictetus PG Bank, "e.t." happened yesterday morning in an important meeting.

As you probably know by now, unless you are in denial, the SM and the GMA are in an [illegible] estate P76 billion of our money into the bank.

Today, amazingly, we have nothing to show for it. It's fact, the market value of the investment has been cut by about half.

And so yesterday, the bank's "nomination committee" was supposed to finalize the line-up of candidates to the new board.

Whaddayano—Equitable PCI chair Antonio Go, the point man of the Go family in the bank, who are actually the minority stockholders, stabbed the opposition in the back.

And so the same ratop from "e.t." came out of the mouth of SM president Gotz dela Paz, possibly as a rejoinder to Tony Go. Anumanmo I can also have the word.

* * *

SOLI new: the SEC said the GSIS, as the biggest stockholders holding more than 40-percent interest in the bank, are hoping to wrest control of the board from the Go family.

That's the only way our pension funds can ever hope to start some reforms in the bank, and thus hopefully we can get a little more return for our problematic investments.

To take away control from the Go family, the SSS and the GSIS had thought, correctly, that they would need a one-time, honest-to-goodness election of the board.

Last year, the Go family sprung a surprise offer to the SSS and the GSIS, by unqualifiedly all other candidates. Then they put in their "independent" directors.

This time, the "nomination committee" should finalize the lineup of candidates 30 days before the election during the annual stockholders' meeting on July 19.

That should give the candidates a little time to contest what the Go family said these "stock dogs" in the bank may, again, suddenly decide to forge to their nomination.

Dela Paz was pushing for the committee approval of the Go group yesterday, fearing that the elections would again take out his last prop's Go family coup.

For obvious reasons, committee chair Tony Go refused, and without much ado, thank you, he called for a dismissal of the house. The meeting ended in the passage.

That's when Dela Paz blurted out the "E" word. It is music to my ear to tell me that, if only for the sake of 20 million SSS members, Dela Paz is on the rampage against the family that preys on the bank together.

* * *

OKAY, I know that I am a little unkind to Dela Paz in previous columns, mainly because I thought that she was letting the Go family get away with something tantamount to robbery.

While the SSS and the GSIS put in P76 billion into a "joint venture" with the Go family to acquire the old PCI Bank, the Go family did not put in a single centavo.

The Go family simply used the money of the bank. All P76 billion! That, in nutshell, is called "sin capital." They coin pocket these winnings by controlling the bank.

The beauty of it all is that, in one joint suit vse by some unscrupulous PRs for them, the Go family own claims that everything was all right. Di-yosis!

Let me see if I get this right.....so the Go family borrowed money to pay for their part in the joint venture, and when they could not pay for the loan, they simply got other people's money, which is our weight, because the family still controls the bank—so that it?

Hey, Sanjie, listen, I want the same arrangement. If you please, to all my dealings with banks from now on, okay? I also want to use other people's money, without permission.

* * *

ABSTRACT: bank insiders told me that, slowly and without fanfare, Dela Paz is working on an audit of that questionable P36.4-billion 8-year-old transaction of the Go family.

For instance, because the bank gave up a good chunk of its turf from that P76 billion that the Go family used for their personal benefit, in effect, the SSS investment took a big hit.

Unknown to many aside from its internal auditors and the supposed, alleged or so-called "joint venture" with the Go family, the SSS bought some more Equitable PCI shares. That's why Dela Paz seems to be coming hell bent.

Fellow Tony Go again saddled the approval of the lineup of candidates to the board, apparently to Dela Paz if, was a sign of mischief scheme that the Go family would use to keep their stranglehold over the bank.

Look, she even threw a little explainer to award Tony Go's ears, which I was wrong in misjudging Dela Paz in earlier columns as a wimp. So sue me!

* * *

EPIPHANY to the government side in the Equitable PCI board is that the Go family will do anything to continue to control the board—even "personal"-style.

They started the board at present, and they can use the same control to railroad the bank-running board elections.

Once they take control of the board smorgasbord, even as a minority group, they can push for their "swap deal" with the bad bad, bad himself, John Gokongwei Jr.

Earlier, the Go family has been dumping that there was such a deal. Believe me—there is one. And they even used the low-time excuse for the denials.

By the way, the SSS and the GSIS, in their joint venture with the Go family to acquire the old PCI Bank, actually gave their cash and, later, the cash of the bank, too, to the sellers, among them.... well, none other than Gokongwei.

And now, a certain chief hotshot is getting inside again through a little "swap deal." In short....no cash involved. Wow!

Once Gokongwei is inside the bank, something he would not do while Rafael Buenaventura was still the Bangko Sentral governor, there's no telling what he can do.

Probably he can even dilute the SSS and the GSIS, who knows? Or even, once he is inside the bank again, it will be hard for the two pension funds to legally flush holdings. Things like those!

* * *

ABSTRACT: among those whose nominations earned some questions from the Go family "attack dogs" in the board were retiram banker Edmund Go), since he was supposedly once part of Commercial Bank, which has been in a legal tangle with the bank.

Another was Peter Garrucho, who supposedly once worked for the Malaysian group of tycoon Silvrio Pashongco.

The SEC already disqualified former foreign affairs secretary Roberto "independent director" Romulo to become — and I, as "independent" director, he probably ordered his installation to the Go family.

There were also questions regarding former ambassador Cesar Bautista's qualifications.

But there were just stray kinks in the nomination. As Dela Paz correctly pointed, about 25 candidates were already approved. Who should Tony Go nail the committee's colors?

Obviously, it is the game plan, what else? After all, the Go family is only taking advantage of some P36 billion in the hands of the troubled SSS, which we, the members, only paid for without blood. What's that to the Go family, right?

* * *

BET now that Dela Paz turned out to be also not here in the bank, together with GSIS general manager Winston Garcia, we can expect a lot of fireworks.

Look at this, according to insiders, Dela Paz and Garcia are working together to get their chairwoman's fair chance in the Equitable PCI affairs.

Who would have thought that a lawyer and CPA could see eye to eye, get their act together, and give the Go family hell in the board of the bank, after all, as one?

And that, to me, should make it a lot harder for the Go family to impose their nominees on the bank. The last time I checked, they are the majority stockholders.

Insiders also promised me that our boys are seeing something yet. Three six years on the Go family's dealings in the bank, and, wow, just the appetizers.

GOOD NEWS!

FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES & COLLEGE UNDERGRADUATES AS WELL AS GRADUATES SEEKING SPECIAL SKILLS THAT WILL QUALIFY THEM FOR IMMEDIATE RELATIVELY GOOD-PAYING EMPLOYMENT.

They may now take at the Institute of Continuing Legal Studies and Education a TESDA-authorized Special "Crash" Course that will develop—in just two to three semesters—their skills in the performance of legal tasks otherwise performed by full-pledged lawyers, with special focus on computerized/systemized legal research, legal analysis/case briefing, and the writing of persuasive court pleadings and position papers.

Qualified graduates can work as legal or executive assistants in law firms and in the legal departments of government offices/agencies and of private corporations. Their acquired training will also boost their qualifications for supervisory administrative positions.

To accommodate working students, classes are held only on Saturdays (whole day) for the 3-semester program and including Tuesdays and Thursdays after office hours for the 2-semester program.

For further particulars, visit the Institute at 214 Wilson St., Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila, or call Linda or Zilla at Tel. 721-34-10/725-14-81/727-0432 and 724-08-95 (locals 24) E-mail address: icsmanila@mozcom.com

ENROLLMENT NOW IN FULL SWING.

PPA to bid out Batangas Port-2

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINE Ports Authority is planning to bid out the operation of Phase 2 of the Batangas Port in early 2006, the head of the maritime agency said.

PPA general manager Oscar Sevilla said he was expecting the two biggest local port operators—International Container Terminal Services Inc. and Asian Terminals Inc.—to vie for the contract.

The 528-hectare Phase 2 of the Batangas port will be inaugurated on July 16. The government spent about P13.3 billion to develop the phase. The funds came from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

The second phase is six times larger than the Phase 1, which covers 28 hectares and is being operated by ICT.

The Batangas local government had also expressed interest to operate the facility.

Unlike the first phase that caters only to passengers and cargoes, Phase 2 was designed to accommodate bulk, break bulk and container load. The new port does not have a passenger terminal.

PPA assistant general manager Benjamin Umiliz said the port could accommodate 7,000 TEUs or twenty-foot equivalent units. A TEU is a measure of containerized cargo equal to a standard size of 20 foot length of 8 ft. width and 8.5 ft. in height.

The Batangas Port serves as the transport hub of goods in the Calabarzon area. It also functions as a terminal for passengers traveling to and from nearby provinces like Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan.

EMBASSY OF CANADA
is seeking for a
Community Coordinator

The Community Coordinator is responsible for various areas: a number of categories; information and federal functions including responding to requests for information from families coming from Canada; consulting newly-arrived families and providing referrals to; maintaining a small library of recent brochures, other reference materials and maintaining a list of community resources such as babysitters, household help, etc. Another category is Community Activities where the Community Coordinator organizes a calendar of events such as workshops, round-table discussions, Term For Kin, welcome party, etc. The Community Service Newsletter category involves coordinating, drafting and publishing a monthly newsletter for the Embassy community. Other services include organizing functions/activities to support community functions and updating of the Embassy bulletin board.

Interested applicants should have lived in Manila for at least 12 months, should be knowledgeable of Manila and the Philippines including basic Tagalog. Fluent in English and/or French. Contract period is from August 1, 2005 to August 31, 2006.

For more information on this position and details on how to apply, please contact:

PERSONNEL OFFICE
Embassy of Canada
E-mail Address: manil.hr@international.gc.ca
Phone Number: 812-7909
Re: Community Coordinator
* All applications must be in no later than Wednesday, 1600 July 20, 2005.

Rice output seen missing target

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture is expecting the country's rice production this year to fall short of the target.

Based on a survey conducted by the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, production will likely reach only 14.75 million metric tons.

Outgoing Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said this was lower than the target of 15.1 million metric tons but was 2 percent higher than last year's production of 14.4 million MT.

Yap said farmers planted earlier and closer to normal, returning to level rice continue to need for replacing that were exported to hit historical lows and November. There yields, however, are expected to fall below desired levels due to lack of water and lower use of fertilizers.

A first-level irrigation administrators (NIA) survey showed that only 59 percent of the areas programmed for planting had been prepared by the end of June.

Farmers released their use of fertilizers due to the rising prices of the input. Retail case prices this year have increased by 30-40 percent from 2004 levels. This is said to contribute to the reduction of the farm yields. Agriculture Rice Program Director Bravo Mabaleuan said in another interview.

Mabaleuan said the occurrence of the El Niño phenomenon from January to July resulted in inadequate water supply in most of the dams and run-off river irrigation systems.

El Niño refers to an occasional swelling unusually characterized by extreme hots and droughts.

Mabaleuan further pointed out that an ongoing repair of the canals and tunnels in the Upper Pampanga River Irrigation System (UPRIS) delayed the release of water from the dam, affecting about 42,000 hectares in Bataan.

The DA is coordinating with local government units to provide area-specific intervention such as the use of rice cultivars to increase yield levels.

The DA is also promoting cost-reducing technologies such as the integrated pest management (IPM) and Tapol (Basic Balanced Fertilization) schemes.

3 YEAR WARRANTY

PAPER ENTERPRISES

intimus

KEEP YOUR SECRETS, SECRET!

PAPER SHREDDER | MSS | MSC | SIMPLEX AC | SAW MARK

₱3,500 | ₱8,950 | ₱20,950 | ₱27,950 | ₱60,950

A VITAL PART OF YOUR SECURITY.

ELITE

APOLLO

Delay in signing of RP-Japan trade deal seen

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TALKS on an economic partnership agreement between the Philippines and Japan are on the final stretch but the deal signing may be delayed beyond September as negotiations focus on fine details, according to the officer in charge of the Department of Trade and Industry.

Thomas G. Aquino, a DTI senior undersecretary, said the issues that were taking the time of the negotiators included the following: the pace of tariff reduction on vehicles and the number of workers that would be allowed to move between the two countries.

"So things are turning out, there might be a slight delay," Aquino said.

He said certain concerned industries needed to be consulted on various issues, which was taking time to iron.

At the tariff removal on vehicle imports, aquino said that had yet to be brought up with the Tariff Commission although the local industry wanted a gradual removal of duties as opposed to Japan's position seeking immediate removal.

Still, Aquino said he was confident a Japan-Philippines EPA could be signed within the year. The deal would have to be ratified by Congress.

He said local business stood to gain from a JPEPA as Japanese companies would be taking advantage of business opportunities in the country through ventures with Filipino firms.

He detailed reports that the proposed JPEPA would limit old Filipino investments in their own land as a result of the Retroactivity provision that aimed to give "special treatment" to Japanese investments.

Included in the chapter on investment are the performance requirements prohibitions that classify the Philippine government's existing regulations for Japanese and other foreign investors, he said.

The Philippine negotiating team is very careful in bargaining with their counterpart to ensure that the final EPA abides by Philippine laws.

PLDT cut debt by $100M in Q2

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. has reduced its debts by about $100 million in the second quarter, or only half of the $200 million paid by Chec-country in the first quarter.

PLDT president Napoleon Nazareno said that the company was still determined to achieve its debt reduction.

"I think the debt pay down is largely dependent on the timing of maturities. I think we have a high level of maturing debts in the third quarter," Nazareno said in an interview.

PLDT, which is 15 percent owned by NTT Communications and 24 percent by Hong Kong's Fare Pacific Co. Ltd., has about $1.7 billion in debts that it intended to reduce significantly in the next three years.

Under its debt reduction program, PLDT aims to cut its obligations to $1 billion by the end of 2006.

For this year, PLDT will pay at least $640 million in debts.

Preparing debts will allow PLDT to save on interests and minimize currency risks. The telecom giant settled last Dec. 20 a $166 million debt ahead of schedule.

In the meantime, Globe Telecom Inc. said its debt reduction strategy was also on track. PLDT and Globe officials said their companies were not affected by the outlook downgrade by Fitch Ratings, Standard & Poor's and Moody's Investors Service.

Breaktime

From page B1

Move and leader explosive, we must expect it coming days, they told me.

I even think if that a member of the Go family is calling to spill the beans. Really. I can hardly wait for it becoming boardsheds.

Part of it involves a heritage outbreak, a certain Tom Gonzaga, who sits in the board, getting to get you and on get perks. A member of the Go family said that he has the goods on the Cojuangco strongest.

But still, our heart bleeds for the good old senator Eva Estrada, who is the "brain" of the Go family. I don't know if he is willing to get involved in coup's cases.

For court cases are what the government needs, plus some other stockholders, are preparing to a family feud. Build and Chase!

ISUZU

BACK 2 BACK Xtras

Enjoy back to back excitement with ISUZU's extra giveaways! Get thousands worth of **FREE SM Gift Checks and FREE Insurance coverage*** when you buy any ISUZU D-MAX, Crosswind and IPV from any authorized dealer nationwide. Back up now to the ISUZU dealer nearest you. Hurry! Promo period is from July 4-August 31, 2005 only.

IPV

ISUZU D-MAX

ISUZU CROSSWIND XUV

Mechanics

1. For every outright cash or financing purchase of any ISUZU D-MAX, Crosswind, IPV unless a corresponding 1 year Comprehensive Insurance and/or SM Gift Checks will be given away for FREE.
2. Get FREE P10K worth of SM Gift Checks and FREE 1 year Comprehensive Insurance when you buy any D-MAX 4x4 MT/ PTT, Crosswind XUV-4X4 MT/ PTT and Crosswind XUV AT vehicle.
3. Get FREE P10K worth of SM Gift Checks when you buy a Crosswind XUV MT.
4. FREE P10K worth of SM Gift Checks for each purchase of D-MAX 4x2 AT/ PTT, Crosswind XT/ XL, or IPV.
5. SM Gift Checks are accepted in all SM stores & affiliated shops, but are non convertible to cash. SM affiliated specialty shops in all its 33 stores nationwide include Our Home, Watsons, Toy Kingdom and Ace Hardware.
6. SM GCs not claimed from the selling dealer within 60 days from vehicle sale issue will be forfeited in favor of Isuzu Philippines Corporation and with the prior approval of DTI.

Per BIR ATP Permit number 3431- Series of 2002

ISUZU

Your responsible partner

www.isuzu.com.ph

Australian group asks court to bar Ongpin group from ETPI

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

AN AUSTRALIAN group has asked the Makati Regional Trial Court to bar an information technology firm identified with former Trade Minister Roberto V. Ongpin from buying into Eastern Telecommunications Phils. Inc.

ETPI director and former chair Roger Haslehurst said in the complaint filed before Branch 61 of the Makati RTC that the transfer of ETPI shares to Ongpin's ISM Communications Corp. was prohibited as Ongpin was closely associated with the late President Ferdinand Marcos.

ISM on Tuesday agreed to acquire 17.7 percent or 63 ETPI through a share-swap agreement with the seven investors & managers inc., one of the minority shareholders of ETPI.

Haslehurst represents MCH Philippines Inc. (MCHP), a wholly owned subsidiary of Australian Gigabyte Network International Pty Ltd. that owns 40 percent of ETPI.

MCHP is entitled to one board seat in ETPI.

Haslehurst said the sovereign panel of United Nations-accredited conciliators in Switzerland ruled in favor of MCHP in a dispute with ETPI.

Haslehurst argued through lawyers that the Presidential Commission on Good Government has expressed that it would abide by the policy that "government ill-gotten wealth should not be allowed to find new illtrust[s] associations."

They also said that the PCGG rules, which paved the way for a due diligence by ISM, violated the guidelines established by the Supreme Court in a case dated April 30, 2003.

ISM had been in talks with the MCH Group on acquiring MCHP's 40 percent interest in ETPI, but no deal was struck.

ISM also expressed interest last year to buy the government's stake in ETPI.

Lawyers also claimed a conspiracy between two PCGG directors in ETPI.

In a letter earlier addressed to PCGG commissioner Ma. Cleo and Estefania Attado last June 16, ACDP legal counsel Andrew Isaacson wrote that the two PCGG nominees "stood to remain and replace, without due notice or just cause" then ETPI chair Roger Haslehurst and the president and chief executive officer Nenita Lim Cruz, "contrary to morals, good customs or public policy."

Isaacson claimed that such action was carried with "manifest partiality, evident bad faith, or gross inexcusable negligence" which caused injury to ACDP and the government.

It also blasted the group led by Ongpin who wants to gain control of ETPI, Isaacson said earlier.

Conversation has two seats in ETPI's five-seat board and is represented by Ongpin as appointed chairs of Philippine Investors and Managers Inc. in ETPI disputed since the Marcos administration.

Aside from the 20 percent of Philpen, government directly owns 15 percent in ETPI representing permanent assets from the Marcos period.

Another seat is held by a Filipino director, Pablo Lobregat, through laborcom.

The remaining 10 percent is held by Smart Communications Inc. It has no appointed director in ETPI.

Firms brace for lower profits, weak peso

A FLOOR trader monitors share prices at the Philippine Stock Exchange in Makati financial district. ALVIN

quarter foreign exchange gains worth P2.4 billion almost erased.

But company officials and the country's largest telecommunications group had hedges covering about 30 percent of its total debt of $1.67 billion at the end of the first quarter.

"It's easy to be very negative," said Jojo Gonzales, managing director of Philippine Equity Partners. "But realistically, with the exception of the exchange rate, there's no material impact on companies yet."

Banco Filipino said the average gaming level of listed firms had fallen to around 66 percent this year from 77 percent in 2004 and 88 percent in 2003.

Higher interest rates—after the central bank raised its benchmark rates by 25 basis points in April and increased the reserve requirements of banks by 2 percentage points last week, and corporate borrowers borrowing costs.

Rising electricity and oil prices, plus higher labor costs after a government-mandated increase in the minimum wage, is likely to hurt consumer firms such as San Miguel Corp. and Jollibee Foods Corp.

"I think costs are moving up faster than selling prices," Bautista said. "This is pressing some pressure on margins."

Previously, they will pass it on but this will only happen when banks start to unbundle.

The outlook downgrades will put pressure only on firms that plan to raise funds via the debt market, analysts said.

San Miguel, in the midst of a repriced exercise, is considering a bond issue of up to $500 million to refinance its existing loans.

But Gonzales and San Miguel may simply delay the bond issue because it is narrowing in 2005 do not come due until toward the end of the year. Bautista

Crisis divides influential business group

board should have called a general assembly before weighing in "on a matter so decisive to the nation's political and economic stability."

"Considering the 300 or 350 members who are active in MBC, I believe we represent a significant part of the organization," he said. "After all, we are at least triple the number of those in the board of directors."

"This is not just a matter of who is in the magic 15. Public appeal the open letter to the MBC board] are not only business executives...they are concerned corporations," Martinez said.

MBC executive director Guillermo Luz said the separate statement that the group of 15 "ignores the core issue, which is about the Client's right, the ability to lead, the search for truth and the level of debate" directed at Malacañang.

"[They are] saying the country does not organize [one] hour this to oil tangent," Luz said. "The bigger issues are upon us), the economy is in trouble."

Still, Luz said the MBC was opposing to oppose the disagreement and dissenting opinion. "We have private channels of communication and we are treating this as an internal matter in the MBC."

The controversial statement was read last Friday during a joint press briefing with Federation of Free Workers (FFW) president Jose Mario Crisanto, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) president Jesus Arranz, Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) president Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr. and Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) president Bernardo Villegas.

Also last Friday, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry refrained from calling for the President's resignation but said any changes in government should be done within the rule of law. PCCI, a staunch ally of Mr. Arroyo, said the President "has the constitutional right, we support the constitutional process, including impeachment proceedings." In a statement, the Management Association of the Philippines asked government leaders "to demonstrate statesmanship, which in no manner serves to place the interest of future governance of Filipinos."

"Given the challenges like the country faces), the arrests of the past months and the [economy] is in crisis, in our view, seriously impaired the ability of the Presidency to address these problems," MAP said.

The group advised the MBC statement saying the longer the President stays in office under a cloud of doubt and mistrust, the greater the damage to the economy and and the greater the citizens' ability to focus seeking socio-constitutional transformation process.

"We acknowledge that the President has achieved commendable progress in many of her programs," MAP said. "To persevere [on] a legacy she could leave [as] with unaccountable and unbridgeable the Presidency to her unconstitutionally-sanctioned successor."

At the same time, the Australian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines urged the quarrel to resolve the crisis in the context peaceful democratic methods in the rule of law and the Philippine Constitution.

"National stability is an essential requisite for a strong business environment," Strachan said. "We regret that a political crisis has recently developed [here] which severely impairs our ability of the current administration to govern effectively."

DISCLOSURES

SSM Development Phils. Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 29, 2 p.m. at the 17 Corporate Business Center, 117 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of July 11 are entitled to notice and vote at the meeting.

* * *

ABS-CBN Holdings Corp. disclosed that its Philippine Deposit Receipts agent has received notice from its shareholders for the exercise of rights equivalent to 313,000 PDRs for the issuance of 313,000 ABS-CBN common shares. The reduction by 313,000 PDRs will take effect on July 15, bringing the number of PDRs listed to a total of 268.56 million PDRs.

* * *

TRANS-ASIA Oil and Energy Development Corp. disclosed that the company, together with the Department of Energy, in consortium with Alcorn Gold Resources Corp. and PetroEnergy Resources Corp., completed on July 6 the execution of a petroleum service contract covering a 444,000-hectare area in the Cuyo Visayan region. The start duration of participating interests is: Alcorn Gold, 40.00 percent; Trans-Asia, 20.24 percent; and Petro Energy, 39.76 percent.

* * *

EQUITABLE PCI Bank Inc. disclosed that it has 131 million shares of common stock outstanding and amount of debt outstanding. The forum for validation of proxies is scheduled on July 14, 4 p.m. at the Mezzanine flr., Rage of Bond, Ortigas, Equitable PCI Bank, Inc. Ernest L. Makati City.

* * *

LEGAZPI Investment Holdings Corp. 's board approved the following resolutions: writing off of the company's mining assets and properties as stated in the financial statements of the company; writing off the company's liability for advances and/or loans with Cebu Pacific Securities Ltd. Assets P1-8.97 million; reclassification of the books of accounts; holding a delinquency sale not later than 30 days or more than 60 days from the date of meeting at the principal office at 11 a.m.; and the authority of Manny Bautista or his representative to deal with any and all board of delinquent stocks.

Compiled by Gabriel Bernardo, PDI Research

CURRENCIES

July 14, 2005		Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.843477	1.00000	55.1240
Japan	Yen	0.007567	0.00900	0.4962
United Kingdom	Pound	1.462100	1.73300	95.5000
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.108300	0.12838	7.0750
Netherlands	Euro	0.848900	1.00630	55.4700
Canada	Dollar	0.678800	0.80470	44.3400
Australia	Dollar	0.631200	0.74820	41.2300
Switzerland	Franc	0.647100	0.76700	42.2700
Taiwan	Dollar	0.025900	0.03070	1.6920
Singapore	Dollar	0.517700	0.61370	33.8200
South Korea	Won	0.000830	0.00098	0.0542
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.221900	0.26300	14.4900
Thailand	Baht	0.021700	0.02570	1.4170
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.00010	0.0056
Kuwait	Dinar	2.870000	3.40200	187.5000
UAE	Dirham	0.229700	0.27220	15.0000
Qatar	Riyal	0.231800	0.27470	15.1400
Philippines	Peso	0.015300	0.01810	1.0000
Brazil	Real	0.334800	0.39680	21.8700
Mexico	Peso	0.076600	0.09080	5.0050
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.224900	0.26660	14.6900
Bahrain	Dinar	2.236000	2.65000	146.0000
Kuwait	Dinar	2.870000	3.40200	187.5000
New Zealand	Dollar	0.578000	0.68500	37.7500
Norway	Krone	0.118100	0.13999	7.7150
Sweden	Krona	0.110000	0.13040	7.1850
Denmark	Krone	0.113100	0.13410	7.3900
Iceland	Krona	0.013400	0.01590	0.8750
Poland	Zloty	0.218400	0.25890	14.2700
Hungary	Forint	0.003400	0.00400	0.2200
Czech Republic	Koruna	0.029200	0.03460	1.9080
Turkey	Lira	0.000630	0.00075	0.0414
Slovakia	Koruna	0.024900	0.02950	1.6260
Russia	Ruble	0.029200	0.03460	1.9080
Greece	Drachma	0.002500	0.00296	0.1630
Israel	Shekel	0.191000	0.22640	12.4800
Slovenia	Tolar	0.004200	0.00500	0.2750
Estonia	Kroon	0.053900	0.06390	3.5200
Lithuania	Litas	0.244300	0.28960	15.9600
Latvia	Lat	1.441000	1.70800	94.1300
Ukraine	Hryvnia	0.166000	0.19680	10.8400
Romania	Leu	0.000026	0.00003	0.0017
Bulgaria	Lev	0.431500	0.51150	28.1900
Cyprus	Pound	1.731000	2.05200	113.0900
Croatia	Kuna	0.114000	0.13510	7.4470
Serbia	Dinar	0.011500	0.01360	0.7500
Lebanon	Pound	0.000560	0.00066	0.0364
Jordan	Dinar	1.190000	1.41000	77.7000
Egypt	Pound	0.146000	0.17310	9.5400
Tunisia	Dinar	0.656000	0.77760	42.8500
Morocco	Dirham	0.076000	0.09010	4.9650
Algeria	Dinar	0.011600	0.01370	0.7550
Libya	Dinar	0.691000	0.81900	45.1300
Nigeria	Naira	0.006500	0.00770	0.4250
Ghana	Cedi	0.000092	0.00011	0.0060
Kenya	Shilling	0.011000	0.01300	0.7170
Ivory Coast	Franc	0.001300	0.00154	0.0850
Cameroon	CF Franc	0.001300	0.00154	0.0850
Zimbabwe	Dollar	0.002600	0.00310	0.1710

BUSINESS

CA bars implementation of EPCIB by-laws

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE COURT of Appeals has barred the 15-member board of Equitable PCI Bank from implementing any provision of the bank's amended by-laws.

The sixth division of the Court of Appeals issued the temporary restraining order yesterday in response to a petition filed by the group of mall magnate Henry Sy, which has a 2.5 percent stake in the country's third biggest local bank.

The order is effective for 60 days.

Henry Sy's Sysmart Corp. sought the restraining order on grounds that incumbent EPCIBank chair Antonio Go could use the provisions of the amended by-laws to take over the bank during the bank's annual stockholders' meeting scheduled on July 19.

The amended by-laws were published by the Securities and Exchange Commission in November last year.

EPCIB filed a petition with the CA to reverse the order.

"Unwarranted use of the disapproved amended by-laws by the Go family threatens to cause grave and irreparable damage to the majority stockholders, including Sysmart," Sysmart's petition said.

EPCIB, on the other hand, said the TRO would not affect the bank's operations.

"The adoption of the amended by-laws was a legitimate action of the board. We are confident that the final outcome of the case will bear this out," EPCIB said in a statement sent to the inquirer yesterday through e-mail.

Sysmart claimed in its petition with the CA that the amended by-laws would allow the Go family to use fewer votes to disqualify and/or approve the disqualification of nominees to the banks' 15-member board.

It claimed that the revised by-laws stated that the nomination committee were confirmed by the board of directors, may reject the nominations or disqualify a nominee with finality.

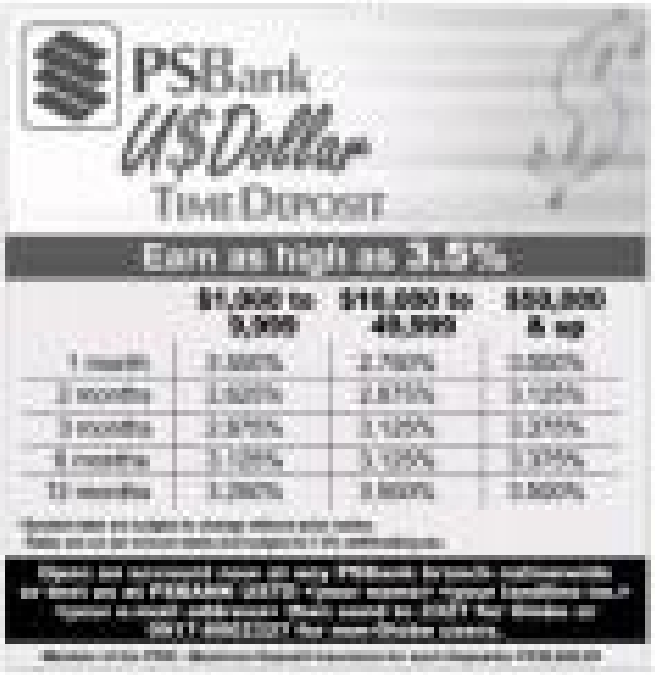
Sysmart added that the nomination committee was effectively composed of nominees of the Go family and their allies.

Allowing the provisions of the by-laws would then be "illegal" and would allow the controlling bloc minority directors—of EPCIBank to perpetuate themselves in power, Sysmart said.

Ramon Ang, meanwhile, has appointed to the nomination of Wilson Gerio as representative of the GSIS to the EPCIB board because of his "diverse and commendable performance as president of the GSIS."

"His (Gerio's) personal qualifications make him unfit to represent the gallant men and women in government service who are the true owners of the GSIS funds," Acosta said yesterday in a statement.

"What kind of corporate governance Gerio will bring to EPCIB, how to help the shareholders and stakeholders of the bank," he added.



US allows duty-free imports of coco products

By Ramon W. Dominguez

EXPORTS of coconut-based raw materials for soaps and detergents are expected to grow after the United States granted Malacañang's request to remove duties under the US generalized system of preferences (GSP) scheme.

Portsie G. Aquino, officer in charge of the Department of Trade and Industry said in a briefing that the US approved the Philippines' request for a waiver from the competitive need limits effectively restored the duty-free treatment accorded to Philippine exports of coco fatty acids starting July 1 this year.

The country was unable to get GSP duty-free privilege for coco fatty acids in July 2003, thus the acids were levied a 2.5 percent Most Favored Nation tariff.

The US imposed ceilings on the GSP beneficiaries through the CNL provision to ensure that more competitive country suppliers would not have an unfair advantage over the less competitive countries as well as the US domestic industry.

The DTI's Bureau of International Trade Relations submitted a petition on coco fatty acids last year for consideration in the 2004 US GSP review.

Results of the review are embodied in a presidential proclamation on GSP modifications that was signed on June 14 and released by the White House last July 1.

Further, Aquino said the developments was consistent with the purpose of the GSP program, which is to promote economic development through trade, rather than through traditional programs.

"Continued enjoyment of the GSP provides an impetus for the country to export higher value products like coco fatty acids," Aquino said.

"This is a positive development in the area of our bilateral trade relations since the US represents an important market for our exports of coco fatty acids," he added.

Aquino said the US government's move significantly benefits Philippine exporters particularly the coconut industry and its allied activities.

Coco fatty acids are produced from coconut oil which comes from the processing of copra or coconut meat.

The country's exports of coconut fatty acids reached $28.22 million or about P1.55 billion in 2004, slightly down by 3.84 percent against the $29.34 million registered in 2003.

The US took in $17.79 million worth of coco fatty acids, followed by Malaysia with $5.32 million; Spain, $1.93 million; China, $1.4 million; and Netherlands, $1.7 million.

From January to April, exports of coco fatty acids reached $13.39 million or about P739 million, an increase of 39.7% percent from $10.09 million in the same period in 2004.

LIFESTYLE

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY [illegible] • THURSDAY FOOD • FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

MYRNA Segismundo at the launching of her book "Philippine Cuisine" in Bonifacio Global City

A no-nonsense cookbook

THE BEST Ube Ice Cream from Hyatt's Market Cafe

Every Filipino kitchen should have a copy of Myrna Segismundo's 'Philippine Cuisine,' which is filled with honest-to-goodness recipes that work

CHEF Myrna Segismundo's book, "Philippine Cuisine," is now available. It has a recipe for practically every Filipino dish that comes to mind. From pansit to relleno, lumpia to pastillas, empanada to ukoy. Even a chapter on condiments!

If there's anything extraordinary about the book, it is that Myrna has stories it still has readers to mind. The procedures are simple and, at the same time, they retain the very essence and techniques that are essential in whipping up fine Pinoy food.

"Philippine Cuisine" is a no-nonsense book filled with honest-to-goodness recipes that really work. It's certainly for every cook, whether amateur or professional, and for every Filipino kitchen, whether here or abroad, terrific reasons abound. [illegible]

Reggie Aguayo

KITCHEN RESCUE

Sun music, purple ice cream

Everybody loves a party and my family is no exception. It's safe to say that we are unstoppable at throwing them. Any fun week she had two, the highlights of which were Vince, the saxophone player, and ube ice cream.

Imagine this: A cool room lit with candles, with each table set to perfection and adorned with exotic flowers with lamps emitting the scent of lavender. And with all that, food and wine in abundance. And just when you were so, heightened by this synchronized experience, we about to explode, in walks Bill Clinton with his saxophone, playing sweet music to you! What an evening! All right, maybe it wasn't Bill Clinton, but for us mortals, when I found my own, I could have sworn that it was! The next time you host a party, call Vince [illegible]

The ice cream—don't we just love it?! Last Thursday, we went at the Market Cafe at the new Hyatt Center, Bonifacio Global City. After my mom-daughter share of roasted duck (which was, by the way, excellent) and [illegible], I moved on to dessert. The discovery for the evening was the ube ice cream. So what else ice cream terms "ube-ce" than the ube we had. Everything about it was perfect: It was creamy and so rich a subtle flavor strikes to your heart the other ube concoctions. You tend to lay off the [illegible] much pansy to the taste as that scoop of ice cream [illegible] You could taste everything, even the soul. And I mean that as a compliment!

Digging steaks

And speaking of the Hyatt, I loved [illegible] the Grissini restaurant is very good but what seems most exciting is the opening of their steak house, The Fairplace. I took a peek while I was there and it was chic. Copper ceiling, [illegible] and it was cozy. Copper ceiling, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Showcase of Cuban food and music

CAFÉ Havana Greenbelt 3 opens with Bienvenida A Cafe La Habana until tomorrow, a celebration of Cuban themed food and music. The mini-bar features the bandas de la casa and Ad Hoc Cat Eyl lunch and dinner buffets. The buffet spotlight features gambas, soup and salad combo, Cuban Cubano, Ox Bitten Salmon with Mango Mantle Salsa, Ensaladilla Rusa, Pollo a la Palma, Slong Panda Lomitos, Prawns in Crab Fat, Gazpacho Pin, Pollo's Snickerdoo Tapa, Empas Samurai, Rosbery Cheesecake, Cassiopia with Mango Bells and Yuzu Tropicale. Call 757-9192 to 11.

DINING OUT

THE WESTIN Philippine Plaza's Café Plaza has offers Sugar Free Desserts this month. The buffet includes chocolate cheesecake, cinnamon and dark chocolate cake like Mango Cheesecake, Dark Chocolate Almond, Cashew Nuts Cluster, Fresh Fruit Jello in Aloe Vera, Cherry White Forest Cake and Mixed Berries Pavlova. Call 557-0888.

THE PENINSULA Manila Lobby serves tour for one of chocolate dessert furniture until July 30. There are Classic Hainanese Kiah Chocolate, Chocolate Iced Stranded with Bailey's Cream, Swiss Chocolate spiced with Kirsch and Belgian Milk Chocolate. These are served with a side dish of fresh fruit, marshmallows, chocolate cigars and cakes for dipping. Call 887-2888.

THE HERITAGE Hotel Manila presents The Heritage Grand Buffet for lunch and dinner daily until July 31. Features are Beef and Bell Pepper Salad, Mussel with Citrus Dressing, Korean Clam Chowder, Dumpling Soup with Lemongrass and Dimsum, Wok-tos, Short Ribs Marinated with Herb, Tapsilog Marinated with Garlic, Marinated Chicken in Cajun Spice, Grilled Tuna Steak with Corn Salsa and Apple Pie and Pumpkin Pie. Call 814-8888.

MANILA Pavilion Hotel's Patisserie offers Bastille Cake for July. The cake is made up of two layers—a chocolate Amaretto sponge with honey cream and white chocolate glaze on top. Call 526-2121.

CHATEAU 1771 presents the chef's suggested menus. Signature Re-Birthers Cuisine features Salmon Fillets, Beef Tailed Pinoy Style, Lemon Chicken, Pasta Checks, Butterfilled Prawns, Grilled Leeks and Carrots. Asian Gourmet Group has Shrimp and Salmon Spring Rolls, Garlic Consomme Soup, Steamed Philippine Rice Cake, Garlic Chicken, Braised Beef Short Ribs, BBQ Lapulapu, Broccolini Espanola, Italian Ravioli Inchalee Relish, Tomato Soup, Grilled Vegetable Salad, Beef Clear Bonso, Mushroom Prawn Chicken Pincos, Caramelized Squash Asparagus with Parmesan Cheese Gorgonzola Delight offers Caramelized Scallops, Swiss-Italian Roulette, Chorizo Stuffed Sirloin, Vanilla's Chicken, Philippine Chef Medallions, Mayo Bayo or Swiss Lobster. Call 521-7341.

LINDSEY'S Playground has three dining outlets. Bistro-Ville's Bastilla Blowout or special rates for a group of 10-15. Star Cities Store's Bistro Inchalee Fresh seafoods. Scala enthusiasts get 10-percent discount on drinks. Chubby's Pit Dog Lover's Cafe and Snack Bar showcases insane serving sizes. Chubby's Playground is located at the Ground Floor, Building 3, Star City Complex, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd. Call 551-5000.

MANILA Diamond Hotel's Sky Lounge features Ami San, a concoction of caramel rum, vodka, triple sec, grenadine and orange juice, as its cocktail of the month. Call 1310000.

DISCOVERY Suites' Cafe Barrio presents A Star Spangled Affair this July. The set menus for lunch and dinner features Ham Hagnaloha's Pumpkin Soup, Herbert Salad, California Seafood Cioppino, Southern BBQ Baby Back Ribs, New York Steak, Granola Smith Apple Pie a la Mode. Call 6100000.

along Ridgeway Avenue, QC.

MARINA Restaurant serves Kongpo from the Angel Wings Shaped Shell, Prawns, Sea Bass, Cat Fish, Innovative Recipes to deliver engaging, Braised Tofu with Bamboo Shoots, Mama Peshwari Intoxicated in Smog Aromas, QC Crispy Amethyst and Crispy Pinot Pizza. Jupiter, Makati, Roxas Boulevard, Corinthia A, Makati and Garland Market.

LAVATILING Like new adventure: Alejandro Romero, Henry Go and Joaquin Rodriguez Sr.

Pizza chain opens new branch

THE CALIFORNIA Pizza Kitchen (CPK) MAP has opened at the Promenade, Greenhills Shopping Center.

CPK executives, including Archie Rodriguez, regional director for Asia and the Pacific; Carlos Delgado, and investors Antonio Manuel Dalisay, co-fifth Co, Ed Santos, Jack Rodriguez Jr., Bert Romero and Ramzy T. Co, welcomed guests during the opening of CPK AMA.

CPK MAP offers a wide selection of sandwiches, including hot Grilled Chicken Focaccia, Roasted Turkey Avocado Focaccia, Tuna Salad and Chicken Salad; pastas and salads. Among its popular pizzas flavors are the Jamaican Jerk, Thai Chicken and the new White Pizza.

CPK MAP is owned and operated by Global Restaurant Concepts Inc. (GRCI), licensed franchisee of CPK. GRCI also operates CPK Glorietta 3, CPK Alabang Town Center, CPK Shangri-La Mall and CPK Trinoma Mercato.

PDI FAMILY RECIPE CONTEST

Share your culinary secrets

SEND in your favorite family recipe and help us in our search for the most promising Filipino cuisiner. The PDI Family Recipe Contest, co-sponsored by Gal Supermarket, Interflex and Nagpo Aqua, has Richmond Culinary Arts and Gen Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center will pick three winners every week. The recipes will be published in a book to commemorate issuance's 30th anniversary in December. Here are the rules:

1. In 250 words or less, tell us about a Filipino dish that has been cooked and served in your family. Recipe of the dish itself is mostly optional but it's really produced ingredients and highlights traditional food-cooking techniques. Also, tell us (1) when in your family first cooked and served this recipe; (2) how many generations have cooked it; (3) what it's usually cooked and served; and (4) why it is special to the family.

2. Submit copies of the family dish and a clear, step-by-step written recipe. Include your name, address, daytime telephone number and e-mail address, if any. Photos will not be returned.

3. The recipe must not have been previously published or entered in any other contest. The accompanying essay must be your own original work, and file cannot be edited or rewritten.

4. Persons may submit more than one entry but can only win once. Entries will not be returned, edited or returned. Because is not responsible for late or misdirected entries.

5. Entries should be mailed to Food Editor of the PDI Family Recipe Contest, c/o Lifestyle, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 1300 Clara Town Avenue, Makati City 1203, or e-mailed to ourpaper@inquirer.com.ph. Photo attachment to e-mail should be in jpeg format.

6. Three weekly winners will be picked every Monday and the recipes published on the Thursday of the following week.

7. The top weekly winner will receive P5,000 worth of Gal gift checks that will be honored at any Gal Supermarket. Two runners-up will get a gift from manufacturers or chefs of the regular Filipino School of Culinary Arts. (Be notified before or regardless of prizes by the winners will be allowed. Sponsors may substitute a prize of equal or greater value.

8. Submission of an entry grants because the exclusive right to use the recipe in its publication, and another copy. The editor for size and all recipes. In any media without further compensation to the winner.

9. The contest is open to because readers 18 years of age and older except because employees and members of their immediate family.

10. Judging will be done by the Lifestyle food section staff, whose decisions are final.

A no-nonsense cookbook

From page D1

The menu is interesting! Bee part: Meat and seafood will be cooked in their wood-fired oven! Fireplace specializes in most of all cuts as well as seafood, from all over the world—Baby, Australian and US Black Angus beef, lamb, New opposite meat wear a white triangle. The Fireplace opens in Eastport Jul. 2652 plaza.

Odds and ends

I am expecting a more that specialties in food-to-go. I am looking for a soulful pan de sal supplier. Would you know anyone?

U.R.

Yup! Pop! And there's specified at what they do! Call Josh Cuizo of Purple Oven (8114221, 910 3810 to 65). They make and can custom make anything for you— breads, cakes, doughnuts, cheesecakes, casseroles. They currently supply the biggest coffee shop chains, restaurants, cafés and convenience stores. Best part is, if you call in advance, they can serves your needs, even if it's just one piece of cake.

Stuffed Eggs?

STEPHEN G.H.

Get this out and wasn't sure what to make of it. Found it too cute that I had to reply. I hope (but) you are requesting for a salad egg recipe, forgiven. Got this delicious recipe from my very good friend Nenia Oliveros, whose just once ourself a legion of egg laying ducks:

Itlog na masalat

12 duck eggs (Oliveros Mother or Lolita's. Farmers by order through tel. 9112567)

1 tablespoon salt

Water

Lay eggs in a small pot. Pour cook salt. Add enough water to cover eggs. Cover with lid and leave in a cool and dark place for 15 days. Do not open.

After 15 days you have duck-lings! So, seriously, after 15 days, remove eggs from salt solution. Cook the eggs in boiling water, as you would hard boiled eggs. Add food color to water if you wish.

Anything eggs alalow kamayo. Ay mahalin kuno ay rapunuh na kasama ngayonsaad to Gempin wrapper.

FESTIVAL T. GUERRERO
Aman Kidapawan

I am giving you 2 recipes, one is standard and most of the traditional type, and the other, more like a crepe. Real to you, Jhoyzie, as we Ilokanos would say, "Best appetit and enjoy!"

Lumpia Wrapper

Recipe 1:
1 c flour
1 c water

Recipe 2:
1 c
To a medium mixture and flour
1 large egg or 2 small
To a fresh milk
As water

Combine ingredients and whisk until smooth. Heat a crepe pan, brush with oil and pour or brush batches on pan, swirling fast. Make sure heat is not too high so as not to discolor wrapper. If you want a darker wrapper add more flour.

For questions and comments 896 CCC 8399888.

BSP warns establishments that don't accept coins

FROM TIME to time, I receive complaints from shoppers and moviegoers about cashiers who don't give out exact change to customers. The call earlier today by consumer-conscious BSP new sets of coins are released every year.

But lately, cashiers seem to have gone back to their old ways, not bothering to give customers their due change, especially if it is just five or ten centavos. What's more, based on complaints I am receiving, some cashiers would not even accept coins as payment.

Recently, for example, Libreyle-writer Imelda Angeles-Reyes mall a cashier at the mall's guest of March Lauren Dagooon who refused to accept 10 centavo coins for the toll fee.

If I may add to that, I remember a taxi driver who became rude when I paid him in ten and five peso coins. The BSP complainers desk also has received reports about bicycle drivers who refuse to accept as payment from passengers coins in small denominations.

We got by e-mail this usual complaint: "Cashiers at the grocery section of a drugstore claim in our neighborhood seem to be in the habit of changing their statement. It happened to me twice and each time, I demanded for the exact change. I advise consumers to watch the cash machines and count their change before leaving the counters."

Coin crusade

The BSP couldn't have thought of a more timely campaign than to remind the public of the importance of coins. Although it is still in the planning stage, I would like to tell readers about it this early.

BSP's issue respect the currency, according to a BSP statement, will be called "Ang Barya ay Iba-bahagia." Part of the plan is to encourage students to collect coins. The campaign will also remind consumers they have the right to demand exact change and acceptance of coins as mode of payment.

"The Philippines' small coins in denominations of one, five, 10, and 25 centavos are legal tender and, hence, it is illegal to reject them as mode of payment," warned Director Fe de la Cruz, head of the BSP corporate communications office.

She added that cashiers of business establishments had no excuse to say they were short of coins. The BSP purposely circulated new coins every year, she [illegible]

By the way, the banks are supposed to accept old and tattered bills. So if you happen to have what are they filed as "unfit" bills, go to the nearest bank and exchange them for new ones. But there are some guidelines. Write to the Corporate Affairs Office, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, BSP Bldg., Vito Cruz, Manila, to get the guidelines.

Dogs in malls

Some weeks ago, Cecey Lizardo sent an e-mail relating her traumatic experience with the canine security in a mall. The dog grabbed the bundle she was carrying and, barely missing her face.

Here's a follow-up from Lizardo: "I was at the same mall (yesterday) and about to enter Starbucks when I heard the lady guard warning a lady customer in Tagalog not to enter lest the dog grabbed the canine at the security check area.

"When I asked the guard about the warning, she replied that the sniffing dog grabbed water bottles. I was shocked to know that the same dog that grabbed my bottle was still in the mall... That dog must not be assigned to commercial areas where people commonly buy and carry bottled water."

THE CONSUMER

Marinita Valasco Gilera

ABCs of baking, waitering and bartending

MAMA Kitchen is offering basic courses to prepare individuals for jobs in the food industry.

"Basic Baking" will be conducted 1:30-5:30 p.m., July 26-29. It will cover the preparation of different types of bread dough, quickbreads, pastry dough and cookies, cakes and ready mixes. Participants get a free cookbook.

"Basic Waitering and Bartending" will be conducted 9 a.m.-4 p.m., July 25 and 30. It covers basic setup, techniques of suggestive selling, proper serving and handling, napkin folding and storing. Bartook and glass wash, classification of wine and spirits and simple garnish, with actual tasting of cocktail drinks and wine tasting.

Maya Kitchen is at 8/L, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue (formerly Dasa Road), Makati City. Call (Tuesday-Saturday) 9011181 or 8925851 loc. 106, or e-mail mkitchen@abflours.com.ph.

Ice cream contest holds elimination July 22

THE ELIMINATION round for this year's Nestlé Ice Cream Sculpcontest will be held July 22 at the Julian Maga Kitchen.

Participating in the three-round competition are College of St. Benilde, Philippine Women's University (PWU), St. Paul University Manila, St. Paul University Quezon City, St. Scholastica's College and University of Santo Tomas (UST).

Each school will be represented by one Hotel and Restaurant Management students. The pair in charge will prepare original ice cream recipes.

In the elimination round, contestants will be required to create an ice cream beverage in 10 minutes. The recipes must consist of 30 percent Nestlé Ice Cream.

St. Benilde's Michelle Santiago-Ong will prepare Strawberry Cream Soda with Champagne Fruit Bites, while Esperanza Bautista will make Tutor of Ginger St. Paul Manila students Andrea Li Peter Vasquez and Carmel Uriarte-Cruz are serving Green Xanadudu Mango Shake and Pink Shake, respectively. St. Bed's Katrina Anne Yan's recipe is Carambre and Papaya Smoothie with Tea, while Crescentia Marie Chua's is Red Fruits Smoothie.

PWU's Alvin Andrada is presenting Rainbow Cooler and Aster Pearls Dominguez, Petrey Pink. St. Scholastica's Florence Penbertschrand Lorrel D.M. Gardeza are preparing Pine Nana Mango Paradise Smoothie and Peach Rhum Fizzer, respectively. From UST, Danielle Ann Garcia Mojood will have Oatmeal and Fruity Smoothie while Laura Angelica Matilda Ramos has Dodoma Shake.

The best six will move to the semifinals on July 29 at Nestlé Boulevard. Contestants will prepare 20-minute ice cream desserts. Only three will participate in the final round on August 5 at the World Food Expo (Wofex), World Trade Center.

The Nestlé Ice Cream Sculpcontest grand champion will receive P15,000 while the runners will get P7,500. Runners-up and their advisers will also receive cash prizes. Other participants will get consolation prizes.

Appetizers, beans and pulses

THE REGGIE Aquino School of Culinary Arts is conducting the following classes:

July 13—Easy Appetizers (all new)—Whole Baked Brie Brie, with condiments, Dips of Spinach, corn kinds; Mousse of Chicken Liver; Cheese-based Spreads—Pesto, Garlic and Herb and Goat Cheese with Tomatoes and Fruit; Home-baked Breadsticks and Banana Chips.

July 16—Sizzling (all new)—Burger Steak, Chicken Steak, Pork Chop Steak, Sizzling Angus Steak with Mushroom Gravy, Tuna Teriyaki; Bonus—Java Rice, Mojos Rice, Tadpoles.

July 18—Beans and Pulses (all new)—Casserole with Duck Confit, Delicious Sinigang with Lechon Kawali, Lentejas de Lujo, Fabada de Lujo, Whole Roast Pork and Beans, Delicious Beef Ribs with Raisins, Adz Dishes

July 20—Cooking with Yeast (all new)—Cream Soup of Caramel Roasted Squash, Carrot and Potatoes with Bacon and Apple Crisps; Salads with dressings of kiwi, infused honey, sesame seed and ginger, coconut, balsamic and strawberry, and macadamia. Roasted Beans with sauces...ginger, raspberry, fruit mango-chutney and gravy.

Call 9289266, 9270888, 6335182 and 0911-8099666.

Super snack combos

POPEYES Chicken and Seafood offers "8.+ Super Snacks" available 2-6 p.m. until July 30.

The combos include Crunchy Chicken, P55; Panky Fries, P35; Saucy Spaghetti, P45; Crispy Chicken Strips, P65, the Dubl-Onion Rings, P39, and Biscuit a la Mode, P39. All come with a regular soda.

Popeyes Chicken and Seafood stores are at Greenhills, Robinson's Galleria, Ermita and Metro East, New Farmers Plaza, Cubao; and SM City Pampanga.